The Unknown Neighbour

The Jew in the Thought of Isidore of Seville

Wolfram Drews

THE UNKNOWN NEIGHBOUR

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BY

Wolfram Drews

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AEM   Anuario de Estudios Medievales, Barcelona 1964 ff.

AHC   Annuarium Historiae Conciliorum. Internationale Zeitschrift für Konzilienforschung, Amsterdam 1969 ff.

AHDE   Anuario de la Historia del Derecho Español, Madrid 1924 ff.

AHI   Anuario de Historia de la Iglesia, Pamplona 1992 ff.

AHR   American Historical Review, Washington DC 1895 ff.

AKG   Archiv für Kulturgeschichte, Berlin/Cologne/Graz 1903 ff.

AL   Archivos Leoneses. Estudios y Documentación de los Reinos Hispano-Occidentales, León 1947 ff.

ALMA   Auteurs Latins du Moyen Âge

ANRW   Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt. Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der Neueren Forschung, Berlin/New York 1972 ff.

AST   Analecta Sacra Tarraconensia, Barcelona 1925 ff.

CCL   Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina, Turnhout 1953 ff.

CCCM   Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, Turnhout 1966 ff.

CD   La Ciudad de Dios, Madrid 1881 ff.

CHE   Cuadernos de Historia de España, Buenos Aires 1944 ff.

CIC   Corpus iuris canonici (ed. Emil Albert Friedberg, Leipzig 1879)

CIJ   Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum. Recueil des inscriptions juives qui vont du IIIe siècle avant Jésus-Christ au VIIe siècle de notre ère, I: Europe, ed. Jean-Baptiste Frey, Rome 1936, repr. 1952 ff.

CJ   Codex Justinianus (ed. Paul Krüger, Berlin 1877)

CQR   The Church Quarterly Review, London 1875 ff.

CSEL   Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum. Academiae Vindobonensis, Vienna 1866 ff.

CTh   Codex Theodosianus (ed. Theodor Mommsen/Paul M. Meyer, Berlin 1905)

DA   Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters,
            Marburg/Cologne 1951ff.
DACL   Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie,
            Paris 1907–1953
DThC   Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, Paris 1903–
            1950
EE   Estudios Eclesiásticos. Revista de Teología, Madrid
            1922ff.
EJ   Encyclopaedia Judaica, Jerusalem 1971–1972
EME   Early Medieval Europe, London 1992ff.
FMSt   Frühmittelalterliche Studien, Berlin 1967ff.
GCS   Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten
            drei Jahrhunderte, herausgegeben von der Kirchenväter-
            Commission der (Königlich-)Preußischen Akademie der
            Wissenschaften, Berlin (Leipzig) 1897ff.
HAW   Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft, Nördlingen/Mu-
            nich 1885ff.
HJb   Historisches Jahrbuch der Görres-Gesellschaft, Münster/
            Munich/Freiburg 1880ff.
HRG   Handwörterbuch zur deutschen Rechtsgeschichte, Berlin
            1964ff.
HThR   The Harvard Theological Review, Cambridge/Mass.
            1908ff.
HUCA   Hebrew Union College Annual, Cincinnati 1924ff.
HZ   Historische Zeitschrift, Munich 1859ff.
JbAC   Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum, Münster 1958ff.
JBL   Journal of Biblical Literature, Atlanta 1881ff.
JJS   Journal of Jewish Studies, London 1948ff.
JMH   Journal of Medieval History, Amsterdam 1975ff.
JQR   The Jewish Quarterly Review, Philadelphia (London)
            1888ff.
JSJ   Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenis-
            tic, and Roman Periods, Leiden 1970ff.
JSNT   Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Sheffield
            1978ff.
JThS   The Journal of Theological Studies, London 1899ff.
LdMA   Lexikon des Mittelalters, Munich/Zurich 1980–1999
LV   Leges Visigothorum, ed. Karl Zeumer (MGH, Leges, I:
            Leges Nationum Germanicarum, 1), Hannover/Leipzig
            1902

LRV	Lex Romana Visigothorum (ed. Gustav Friedrich Haenel, Leipzig 1849)
LThK	Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche, Freiburg 1930–1938, ²1957–1966
MAH	Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'Histoire de l'École Française de Rome, Paris 1881 ff.
MGH, AA	Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores, Auctores Antiquissimi
MGH, LL	Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Leges (Fontes Iuris Germanici Antiqui)
MGH, SRM	Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum
MIÖG	Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung, Munich 1880 ff., Innsbruck 1948 ff.
Misc. Wisig.	Miscellanea Wisigothica, ed. Ioannes Gil (Anales de la Universidad Hispalense. Filosofía y Letras, 15), Seville 1972
NTSt	New Testament Studies, London 1954 ff.
OECT	Oxford Early Christian Texts
PG	Jacques-Paul Migne (ed.), Patrologiae cursus completus, series Graeca, Paris 1857–1866, repr. Turnhout 1959 ff.
PL	Jacques-Paul Migne (ed.), Patrologiae cursus completus, series Latina, Paris 1844–1855, repr. Paris 1878–1890, Turnhout 1959 ff.
RAC	Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum, Stuttgart 1950 ff.
RB	Revue Biblique, Paris 1892 ff.
RBén	Revue Bénédictine, Denée (Abbaye de Maredsous) 1884 ff.
REA	Revue des Études Augustiniennes, Paris 1955 ff.
REB	Revue des Études Byzantines, Paris 1943 ff.
REJ	Revue des Études Juives, Paris/Louvain 1880 ff.
RET	Revista Española de Teología, Madrid 1941 ff.
RGA	Reallexikon für Germanische Altertumskunde, Berlin ²1973 ff.
RGG	Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, Tübingen ³1956–1965
RHDFÉ	Revue Historique du Droit Français et Étranger, Paris 1855 ff.

RHE	Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique, Louvain-la-Neuve 1900 ff.
RTPM	Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie Médiévales, Leuven 1933 ff.
s.	sermo
SC	Sources Chrétiennes, ed. Henri de Lubac *et al.*, Paris 1943 ff.
SChH	Studies in Church History, Oxford 1962/64 ff.
SFGG	Spanische Forschungen der Görres-Gesellschaft, Münster
SPE	Santos Padres Españoles
StBP	Studia Post-Biblica, Leiden 1959 ff.
TANZ	Texte und Arbeiten zum Neutestamentlichen Zeitalter, Tübingen 1989 ff.
ThLZ	Theologische Literaturzeitung, Berlin (Leipzig) 1876 ff.
ThZ	Theologische Zeitschrift, Basel 1945 ff.
TRE	Theologische Realenzyklopädie, Berlin 1974 ff.
TRW	The Transformation of the Roman World, Leiden 1997 ff.
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum, ed. Martin Hengel/Peter Schäfer, Tübingen
TSMJ	Texts and Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Judaism, ed. Maurice-R. Hayoun/Ivan G. Marcus/Peter Schäfer, Tübingen
TTH	Translated Texts for Historians, Liverpool
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur, Berlin (Leipzig) 1882 ff.
VC	Vigiliae Christianae. A Review of Early Christian Life and Language, Leiden *et al.* 1947 ff.
VetLat	*Vetus Latina.* Aus der Geschichte der lateinischen Bibel, Freiburg 1949 ff.
VuF	Vorträge und Forschungen, ed. Konstanzer Arbeitskreis für mittelalterliche Geschichte, Konstanz/Lindau 1955 ff.
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, Tübingen 1950 ff., 2. Reihe Tübingen 1976 ff.
ZAC	Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum, Berlin 1997 ff.
ZDADL	Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur, Wiesbaden *et al.* 1841 ff.
ZDP	Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie, Halle 1869 ff.
ZKG	Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte, Stuttgart (Gotha) 1876 ff.
ZRGA	Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte. Germanistische Abteilung, Weimar 1880 ff.

PREFACE

This monograph is a revised and enlarged version of my dissertation thesis, which in 2001 appeared under the title "Juden und Judentum bei Isidor von Sevilla. Studien zum Traktat *De fide catholica contra Iudaeos*" (Berlin, Duncker & Humblot; Berliner Historische Studien 34). I am grateful to Mr Julian Deahl from Brill Academic Publishers who expressed his interest in an English version and to the editors of the Medieval Mediterranean series for their kind acceptance of this proposal. I tried to condense the German text, taking some more recent publications into consideration and adding a chapter on possible theoretical approaches to the subject under discussion. For their suggestions, hints and constructive criticism I wish to thank Raúl González Salinero and Jacques Elfassi.

INTRODUCTION

Isidore of Seville, the "teacher of the middle ages" and "last of the church fathers",[1] was raised to the dignity of a teacher of the church in 1722. During the European middle ages his importance was largely due to his monumental encyclopaedia (*etymologiae* or *origines*) and to the *sententiae*, a kind of theological *summa*, which included a theory of Christian kingship.[2] Isidore's relationship to classical culture has been the object of numerous studies; this is also true for his historiographical writings. By contrast, his theological works have attracted much less attention, especially regarding their originality. This monograph will focus mainly on one of his theological texts, the treatise on Catholic faith against the Jews, first analyzing Isidore's exegetical methods, and later setting the results of his exegesis into the context of his theological and political views.

Isidore's significance is also due to his activities as the leading bishop of the Spanish church at the 4th council of Toledo in 633, which made far-reaching decisions on different matters, one of which was the attitude of the church towards Jewish converts who had been baptized against their will during the reign of King Sisebut. Isidore has often been regarded as a friend, associate and close collaborator of this king, even though the latter often made his political decisions, including those touching upon ecclesiastical matters, without seeking clerical advice. This was also the case with his violent dealings with the Jews of his kingdom.

A fresh look at Isidore's attitude towards both the king and his anti-Jewish policies starts with an analysis of his treatise *de fide catholica contra*

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[1] Fontaine, "Isidoro de Sevilla, padre de la cultura europea", *La conversión de Roma. Cristianismo y Paganismo*, Madrid 1990, 259–286; id., *Isidore de Séville. Genèse et originalité de la culture hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*, Turnhout 2000, 401–416; Menéndez Pidal, "San Isidoro y la cultura de Occidente", *AL* 14 (1960), 376–391.

[2] Ribémont, *Aux origines de l'encyclopédisme médiéval: d'Isidore de Séville aux carolingiens*, Paris 2000. For the circulation and reception of Isidore's *Chronicle* in the middle ages see José Carlos Martín, "La tradition indirecte de la *chronique* d'Isidore de Séville", *Revue d'Histoire des Textes* 31 (2001), 167–225.

Iudaeos, dedicated to his sister Florentina; the purpose of this work, consisting of two books, has never been satisfactorily explained. This text continues the tradition of Christian literature written against the Jews, but it is the oldest of such works written on Iberian soil that has been transmitted with the author's name. In his numerous historiographical and exegetical works Isidore made additional statements that may help to elucidate his positions on Jews and Judaism.

Scholars have interpreted the anti-Jewish treatise either as a missionary work, written to convince the Jews of Christian truth,[3] or as a pamphlet of propaganda meant to combat them.[4] Others adopt the view that it was written both for Jews and for Christians, principally to render the latter "immune" against alleged missionary efforts on the part of the former.[5] This study intends to question theses hypotheses on the basis of an analysis of the foundations of Isidore's argument, which will be put into the context of both his entire literary output and of the political and social situation of his time.

Isidore's great renown during the middle ages provided the basis for a reception of his positions in texts written during the following centuries.[6] His treatise *de fide catholica* was one of the most influential

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[3] See among others Blumenkranz in his early publications, e.g. "Die jüdischen Beweisgründe im Religionsgespräch mit den Christen in den christlich-lateinischen Sonderschriften des 5. bis 11. Jahrhunderts", *ThZ* 4 (1948), 128f.; Williams, *Adversus Judaeos*, Cambridge 1935, 217, who highlights the "moderating force of Isidore's influence". See also Castán Lacoma, "Un opúsculo apologético de San Isidoro", *RET* 20 (1960), 322 and Hernández Martín, "La España visigoda frente al problema de los judíos", *La Ciencia Tomista* 94 (1967), 677. A similar position was recently taken by Fontaine: "Cette préférence pour la persuasion semble inspirer le projet du *De fide*" (*Isidore de Séville. Genèse et originalité de la culture hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*, Turnhout 2000, 191), who notes, however, that these alleged "good intentions" are contradicted by his hostile tone, which should warn us against Isidore's supposed intention to persuade (baptized) Jews. For a recent summary of scholarship on Isidore's attitude toward the Jews see Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law*, Berkeley *et al.* 1999, 103–105.

[4] See some works of the later Blumenkranz, e.g. "Die Entwicklung im Westen zwischen 200 und 1200", *Kirche und Synagoge. Handbuch zur Geschichte von Christen und Juden I*, Stuttgart 1968, 103.

[5] Schreckenberg, *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos-Texte und ihr literarisches und historisches Umfeld (1.-11. Jh.)*, Frankfurt/M. and Bern 1982, 438; see also Blumenkranz, *Les auteurs chrétiens latins du moyen-âge sur les juifs et le judaïsme*, Paris/La Haye 1963, 90f.

[6] For the political instrumentalization of Isidore as a "Leonese" patron saint see Henriet, "Un exemple de religiosité politique: saint Isidore et les rois de Léon (XIe–XIIIe siècles)", *Fonctions sociales et politiques du culte des saints dans les sociétés de rite grec et latin au Moyen Age et à l'époque moderne*, Wroclaw 1999, 77–95. For Isidore's hagiographic "promotion" see also Gaiffier, "Le culte de saint Isidore. Esquisse d'un travail", *Isidoriana*, León 1961, 271–283; Drews, "Bücherverschlingung als kulturelle Praxis? Magisch-

ones in the middle ages; numerous manuscripts have come down to us especially from the early and high medieval period. The number of manuscripts decreased only when anti-Jewish polemicists started to take the Talmud and rabbinic literature into consideration in the later middle ages; since Isidore said nothing in this respect, the usefulness of his œuvre declined in the eyes of later readers.

Already in the early middle ages the text was read and copied inside and outside Spain. Parts of the first book were translated into Old High German in the 8th century, being the oldest known translation from Latin into German. Around 750 Alanus of Farfa compiled his collection of sermons *per circulum anni*, for which he used chapters 18–50 out of the first book of Isidore's anti-Jewish treatise. Visigothic authors such as Ildefonse and Julian of Toledo used Isidore's text, quoting from it in their anti-Jewish works (*de perpetua virginitate sanctae Mariae contra tres infideles* and *de comprobatione sextae aetatis*). In the early Islamic period the Jewish convert Paulus Alvarus of Córdoba may have used Isidore's text in his correspondence with Bodo-Eleazar, a former chaplain of emperor Louis the Pious, who had converted to Judaism.

Until the high middle ages Isidore's treatise remained one of the most important sources for authors of anti-Jewish works. In the early 12th century it was included in the *Liber floridus*, a collection of excerpts compiled to form an illustrated encyclopaedia covering various fields of knowledge and culture. It is important to note that it did not fall into oblivion after the discovery of rabbinic literature by Christian theologians.[7] Pope Benedict XIII, who was instrumental in staging the Christian-Jewish disputation of Tortosa in 1413/14 and eager to convert Aragonese Jews and Muslims to Christianity,[8] owned a theological library whose catalogue has been preserved. Alongside high medieval anti-Jewish works such as Raymund Martini's *pugio fidei* it also included a copy of Isidore's *de fide catholica*. Because of its high standing, the first

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wunderbare Kommunikation in der spanischen Hagiographie des Hochmittelalters", *AKG* 86 (2004), 123–161.

[7] For the changes during the high middle ages see Lasker, "Jewish-Christian Polemics at the Turning Point. Jewish Evidence from the Twelfth Century", *HThR* 98 (1996), 161–173; Chazan, "The Deteriorating Image of the Jews—Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries", *Christendom and Its Discontents. Exclusion, Persecution and Rebellion 1000–1500*, Cambridge 1996, 220–233; id., *Medieval Stereotypes and Modern Antisemitism*, Berkeley *et al.* 1997.

[8] Maccoby, "The Tortosa Disputation (1413/14), and its Effects", *The Expulsion of the Jews and their Emigration to the Southern Low Countries*, Louvain 1998, 23–34.

book (*liber Ysidori contra Iudeos*) was printed in two editions prior to 1500, which means that the anti-Jewish stereotypes reproduced by Isidore had an impact right through the entire middle ages until the early modern period. An analysis of this treatise and of the historical context from which it originated may help to understand and explain the roots of traditions that were influential from antiquity until modernity.

Previous investigators have advanced contradictory views on Isidore's relationship to Judaism. Schreckenberg stressed his generally friendly stance, which would only rarely have been interrupted by moments of hostility. By contrast, Albert denounced Isidore as a staunch enemy of the Jews, whose alleged intention was to eradicate Judaism altogether. Numerous scholars have limited their analysis to an interpretation of the introductory passages of his treatise against the Jews, without taking the whole argument, let alone the context, into consideration.[9] Superficial judgements highlighting Isidore's alleged linguistic competence can make no contribution towards clarifying the aim and effectiveness of his argument.[10]

An analysis of the treatise *de fide catholica* has to start with an investigation of the question which version of the biblical text is used as the basis for the argument, since both the scope of the biblical canon and the authority of different translations were hotly debated between Jews and Christians in antiquity. Second, it is important to establish the sources; a comparison with earlier works belonging to the corpus of the so-called *adversus Iudaeos*-literature will clarify the extent of the author's originality.

When addressing Isidore's attitude towards the Jews it is essential to take into account his relationship to Arianism and other heterodox groups within Christianity. In addition, one has to look at his relationship to Jewish contemporaries. Are there any hints that he knew rabbinic sources (if those had reached Spanish soil at all by the 7th century)? In what way does he present the preparation for baptism and the period of the catechumenat? Does this help to clarify his position towards forced baptism?

The importance of Augustine and Gregory the Great for Isidore's thinking has been stressed repeatedly. Therefore it is essential to com-

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[9] "Opus igitur est biblico-apologeticum contra Iudaeos, ut clare habetur ex praefationibus, quae singulis libris praemittuntur." (Zarb, "Sancti Isidori cultus erga sacras litteras", *Miscellanea Isidoriana*, Rome 1936, 132).

[10] Pérez de Urbel, *Isidor von Sevilla*, Cologne 1962 (Barcelona 1945), 195.

pare his views on Jews and Judaism, both in the treatise *de fide catholica* and in his other writings, to their positions. The results of this systematic and comparative analysis will finally provide the basis of an exposition of Isidore's political views with regard to the place of the Jews in Christian Visigothic society.

THE PROBLEM: PARAMETERS OF
IDENTITY IN VISIGOTHIC SPAIN

In the early medieval period, Visigothic Spain stands out for its violent anti-Jewish policies.[1] In other successor states to the Roman empire Jews were victims of periodic outbreaks of harrassment, too, but nowhere were they subjected to waves of persecution that embraced an entire kingdom and that lasted for decades. It was only in the high middle ages that Jews suffered comparably violent attacks.

The position of the Jews, whose presence on Iberian soil dates back at least to the 3rd century, deteriorated from the 4th century onwards, when Christian emperors gradually blocked their access to civil service, hindering the construction of new synagogues and regulating the contact of Jews to their Christian slaves.[2] It is important to note that Judaism retained its time-honoured position of a *religio licita*, which dated right back to the times of Caesar and Augustus, as long as the *Codex Theodosianus* remained in force. Roman emperors never resorted to policies of forced conversion. However, a deterioration of their status in the 6th century may have prompted Byzantine Jews to move westward, which may have led to an increase of the Jewish population of Spain.[3]

The earlier consensus that the Jews lived more or less untroubled by Christian interference under the rule of the Arian Visigoths has recently come under attack.[4] However, among the laws enacted by

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[1] See now Collins, *Visigothic Spain 409–711*, Oxford 2004, 76 and 236f.

[2] Rabello, "Gli Ebrei nella Spagna romana e ariano-visigotica", *Atti dell'Accademia Romanistica Costantiniana* 4 (1981), 809–839; Romano, "Judíos hispánicos en los siglos IV–X", *De la Antigüedad al Medievo*, Madrid 1993, 251–265; Noethlichs, *Das Judentum und der römische Staat*, Darmstadt 1996.

[3] Stemberger, "Zwangstaufen von Juden im 4. bis 7. Jahrhundert—Mythos oder Wirklichkeit?", *Judentum—Ausblicke und Einsichten*, Frankfurt/M. *et al.* 1993, 81–114. Stemberger refers to *CTh* IX, 45, 2, a law from 397 opposing the baptism of Jews who want to convert to Christianity only for opportunistic reasons (ibid., 82).

[4] See González Salinero, "Los judíos en el reino visigodo de época arriana", *Judaísmo Hispano*, Madrid 2002, 399–408, who argues that Arian Gothic kings continued the anti-Jewish policies initiated under the late Roman empire. Against the assumption

Gothic kings before 586 (marked out as *antiquae* in the 7th-century codification, *Liber Iudiciorum*) there is not a single one dealing with the Jews.[5] We have no evidence of Arian synods treating problems relating to the Jews, although it has to be admitted that there is no record of Arian synods at all, with the exception of two assemblies in Toledo, which took place in 580 and 587; but these were entirely devoted to the problem of the relationship between Arianism and Catholicism.

The Hispano-Roman majority of the population of the Visigothic kingdom lived according to the *Lex Romana Visigothorum* (the so-called *Breviarium Alarici*), an *epitome* complied on the basis of the Theodosian code at the initiative of King Alaric II in 506. This book of Roman law was normative both for Catholic and Jewish Romans.[6] It is important to note that the position of Judaism as a *religio licita* was reaffirmed in this code.[7] The provision of the Theodosian Code that synagogues

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of such general continuities in the western successor states to the Roman empire cf. Lotter, "Zur sozialen Hierarchie der Judenheit in Spätantike und Frühmittelalter", *Aschkenas* 13 (2003), 358, and also Sivan, "The Invisible Jews of Visigothic Spain", *REJ* 159 (2000), 369–385.

   [5] Díaz y Díaz, "Introducción general", *San Isidoro de Sevilla: Etimologías*, Madrid 1982, 53: "… disfrutaron de una situación, más que tranquila, favorable durante el período arriano." Cazier ("De la coercition à la persuasion. L'attitude d'Isidore de Séville face à la politique anti-juive des souverains visigothiques", *De l'antijudaïsme antique à l'antisémitisme contemporain*, Lille 1979, 126) takes a similar view, even assuming that Arian kings preferred the Jews to Catholic Hispano-Romans. However, rulers sympathizing with Arian views did not favour Jews unconditionally or generally, as can be told by laws of the emperor Constantius II; see Simon, "Christian Anti-Semitism", *Essential Papers on Judaism and Christianity in Conflict*, New York/London 1991, 171 note 102. The Arian King Theodoric of the Ostrogoths took a predominantly tolerant position towards his non-Arian subjects; he addressed the Jews as follows: *Religionem imperare non possumus, quia nemo cogitur ut credat invitus* (Cassiod. *var.* II, 27, 2; CCL 96, 76). According to Brennecke this dictum is in accordance with Theodoric's concept of *civilitas*; see Brennecke, "*Imitatio—reparatio—continuatio.* Die Judengesetzgebung im Ostgotenreich Theoderichs des Großen als *reparatio imperii?*", *ZAC* 4 (2000), 141 f. For Theodoric's policy towards the Jews see also Amory, *People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy*, Cambridge 1997, 215 f.; Somekh, "Teodorico e gli Ebrei di Ravenna", *Teodorico e i Goti tra Oriente e Occidente*, Ravenna 1995, 137–149 and Liberanome, "Gli Ebrei al tempo di Teodorico e il ruolo della Chiesa di Roma", *Rassegna Mensile di Israel* 54 (1998), 21–39.

   [6] The question whether the *Lex Romana Visigothorum* was also binding on Visigoths is open to debate; see Rabello, preface to Juster, "The Legal Condition of the Jews under the Visigothic Kings", *Israel Law Review* 11 (1976), 248 f. note 115.

   [7] The formula contained in *CTh* II, 1, 10 was adopted for the *Lex Romana Visigothorum*, where the following *interpretatio* was added: *Iudaei omnes, qui Romani esse noscuntur, hoc solum apud religionis suae maiores agant, quod ad religionis eorum pertinet disciplinam* (*LRV* II, 1, 10; Haenel, 34). Out of the 53 laws dealing with Jews in the *Codex Theodosianus* only 10 were repeated in the *Breviarium Alarici*; see Juster, "The Legal Condition of the Jews

should under certain conditions be converted into Catholic churches was taken up unchanged in the Visigothic Code, which leads to the conclusion that Arians, including the king, were not interested in taking over Jewish places of worship.[8] At the council of Narbonne held in 589 the Jews were named as one of the peoples of the realm, even though in last place.[9] It is remarkable that the Jews are mentioned separately as other "Orientals", although they were Roman citizens living according to Roman law. However, the theological perspective of the fathers of this council should not blur the fact that the Jews were legally and culturally part of the Hispano-Roman population;[10] it is inappropriate to talk of "communities of eastern origin, such as Greeks, Jews and Syrians".[11] When analyzing the population of early medieval Spain, not only the Celt-Iberian substratum should be considered a community of "native origin",[12] but also Christian and Jewish Hispano-Romans.

When King Reccared converted to Catholicism in 587 and induced his people to follow suit at the 3rd council of Toledo two years later, the remaining differences between Christian Hispano-Romans and Goths began to diminish. In spite of that it would be misleading to assume a "natural" or cultural difference between Christian and Jewish Hispano-Romans; such a view would be nothing else but a reproduction of the ideological intentions of certain ecclesiastical and royal authors and

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under the Visigothic Kings", *Israel Law Review* 11 (1976), 260f. All the laws dealing with special Jewish taxes were omitted. For the legislation of the *Lex Romana Visigothorum* on the Jews see Linder, *The Jews in Legal Sources of the Early Middle Ages*, Detroit/Jerusalem 1997, 217–233.

[8] Theodosius II *nov.* III, 5 (Meyer, 8f.) enacted in 438; taken over into the *Breviarium* of Alaric II (Haenel, 258); cf. Juster, "The Legal Condition of the Jews under the Visigothic Kings", *Israel Law Review* 11 (1976), 563f. and Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, Oxford 1969, 53.

[9] *Conc. Narb. c.* 4 (ed. Vives, *Concilios visigóticos e hispano-romanos*, Barcelona/Madrid 1963, 147): … *ghotus, romanus, syrus, graecus vel iudaeus*. For the relatively high number of Jews possessing landed or other property in the area of Narbonne, where a Hebrew inscription on a tomb stone was manufactured still in 688, see Lotter, "Zur sozialen Hierarchie der Judenheit in Spätantike und Frühmittelalter", *Aschkenas* 13 (2003), 341f.

[10] On the definition of Jewish identity in the Roman empire see now Mélèze Modrzejewski, "*Filios Suos Tantum*. Roman Law and Jewish Identity", *Jews and Gentiles in the Holy Land in the Days of the Second Temple, the Mishna and the Talmud*, Jerusalem 2003, 108–136.

[11] Ripoll López, "The Arrival of the Visigoths in Hispania: Population Problems and the Process of Acculturation", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 155.

[12] Ibid., 156.

lawgivers.[13] Ecclesiastical canons and royal laws complaining about the support Jews received at the hands of Christian lay people and even clergy still in the second half of the 7th century should warn us not to assume an insurmountable gap on the everyday level.

It is true, however, that there was a rapprochement between Christian Hispano-Romans and Goths. In the course of the 7th century the number of Catholic clerics and bishops of Visigothic descent increased. There remained only one provision that maintained the previous distinction between Romans and Goths: kings had to be of Gothic lineage, even though the definition of that category may have changed over the time. Because of mixed marriages this distinction was blurred in many cases; the father of King Ervig (680–687) came from Byzantium, which made him more or less a "Roman".[14]

King Leovigild collected the laws enacted by himself and his predecessors in a legal code, which was used side by side with the *Breviarium Alarici*.[15] It was only with the promulgation of the *Liber Iudiciorum* by Reccesvinth in 654 that all the laws not contained in this code lost their validity; only at this stage did the Jews lose their status as Roman citizens.[16] It is doubtful that the *Lex Romana Visigothorum* lost its validity before that time, since it was used and quoted by councils at the beginning of the 7th century.[17] Probably Leovigild's law code was not

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[13] For the erroneous assumption of a "fundamental" difference between Christians and Jews see Díez Merino, "San Isidoro de Sevilla y la polémica judeocristiana", *La controversia judeocristiana en España*, Madrid 1998, 77–110.

[14] Görres, "Die byzantinische Abstammung der spanischen Westgotenkönige Erwich und Witiza sowie die Beziehungen des Kaisers Maurikios zur germanischen Welt", *ByZ* 19 (1910), 430–439. Already in the 6th century mixed marriages had undermined the still existing prohibition of intermarriage between Arians and Catholics; King Theudis (531–549) married an Hispano-Roman aristocrat. For the implications, contexts and misinterpretations of the prohibition of intermarriage between the 4th and 6th centuries see Sivan, "The Appropriation of Roman Law in Barbarian Hands: 'Roman-Barbarian' Marriage in Visigothic Gaul and Spain", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 189–203.

[15] Stroheker, "Leowigild", *Germanentum und Spätantike*, Zurich/Stuttgart 1965, 139.

[16] For Jews as Roman citizens in the 7th century see *infra*, p. 270. For the exclusive legal force of the new code see *LV* II, 1, 10–11 (MGH, LL, I, 1, 58f.). For the *Liber Iudiciorum* see Petit, "*Iustitia* y *iudicium* en el reino de Toledo: Un estudio de teología jurídica visigoda", *La giustizia nell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 42 (1995), 843–932. For the laws concerning the Jews in the *Liber Iudiciorum* see Linder, *The Jews in Legal Sources of the Early Middle Ages*, Detroit/Jerusalem 1997, 257–332. For the changing legal status of the Jews under Reccesvinth see González Salinero, "Catholic Anti-Judaism in Visigothic Spain", *The Visigoths. Studies in Culture and Society*, Leiden *et al.* 1999, 129.

[17] Stroheker, "Leowigild", *Germanentum und Spätantike*, Zurich/Stuttgart 1965, 165.

binding upon all inhabitants of the kingdom;[18] a decisive precondition for such a unification of legal practice would have been the conversion of the Visigoths to Catholicism.[19] However, the question whether the *Lex Romana Visigothorum* was personal or territorial law is still hotly debated.[20] Recently scholars have tended to assume that the *Lex Romana Visigothorum* had only legal force for certain groups of persons, as would have been the case with the *Codex Euricianus*.[21] Gothic kings—especially Reccared—enacted laws binding upon all their subjects before 654.[22]

Since legal unification was finalized only under Reccesvinth, who abolished all previous codifications, one should assume a legal dualism

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[18] Against King, "King Chindasvind and the First Territorial Law-Code of the Visigothic Kingdom", *Visigothic Spain. New Approaches*, Oxford 1980, 131–157. But see also Collins, "Law and Ethnic Identity in the Western Kingdoms in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries", *Medieval Europeans*, Basingstoke *et al.* 1998, 3: "All of the codes discussed here (sc. those issued by Barbarian kings) probably were 'territorial', and none applied exclusively to an ethnic group rather than to a whole kingdom."

[19] Nehlsen, "Lex Visigothorum", *HRG* 2 (1978), 1974. Heather (*The Goths*, Oxford and Cambridge/Mass. 1996, 217) opposes the assumption that different groups of persons lived according to different law codes. For older studies see García Gallo, "Nacionalidad y territorialidad del derecho en la época visigoda", *AHDE* 13 (1936–1941), 168–264; d'Ors, "La territorialidad del derecho de los visigodos", *Estudios Visigóticos I*, Rome/Madrid 1956, 91–124 and King, "The Alleged Territoriality of Visigothic Law", *Authority and Power. Studies in Medieval Law and Government*, Cambridge *et al.* 1980, 1–11.

[20] *Quaestio vexatissima*: Claude, "Remarks about Relations between Visigoths and Hispano-Romans in the Seventh Century", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 12f. For the ongoing controversy whether the *Lex Romana Visigothorum* was personal or territorial law see Linder, *The Jews in Legal Sources of the Early Middle Ages*, Detroit/Jerusalem 1997, 217 note 73.

[21] For the strong Roman elements in Gothic law see Wood, "Social Relations in the Visigothic Kingdom from the Fifth to the Seventh Century", *The Visigoths from the Migration Period to the Seventh Century*, Woodbridge 1999, 192.

[22] Liebeschuetz, "Citizen Status and Law in the Roman Empire and the Visigothic Kingdom", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 142f.: "So it is more than likely that the Code of the Gothic king was valid also for Romans, to provide guidance on matters not dealt with in the *Breviarium of Alaric*." Similarly ibid., 147 (" … the *Code of Euric* was a collection of royal rulings intended for both peoples") and García Moreno, "Legitimate and Illegitimate Violence in Visigothic Law", *Violence and Society in the Early Medieval West*, Woodbridge 1998, 46 note 1. Claude assumes that the process of territorialization of Visigothic law started in the middle of the 6th century; see Claude, "Remarks about Relations between Visigoths and Hispano-Romans in the Seventh Century", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 123. See further Siems, "Lex Romana Visigothorum", *HRG* 2 (1978), 1940–1949; Wormald, "*Lex scripta* and *verbum regis*. Legislation and Germanic Kingship", *Early Medieval Kingship*, Leeds 1977, 105–138 and Sirks, "Shifting Frontiers in the Law: Romans, Provincials and Barbarians", *Shifting Frontiers in Late Antiquity*, Aldershot 1996, 146–157.

in the meantime, when Roman law (the *Breviarium Alaricianum*) existed side by side with royal laws, which were enacted successively and individually for specific purposes; such laws were collected by successive Gothic kings. In contrast to the opinion favoured by the majority of older studies the validity of these laws will not have been limited to Gothic subjects alone; it is more probable that it extended to all inhabitants of the kingdom, especially in the period of the Catholic monarchy.[23] According to Collins, the enactment of laws by Gothic kings was a continuation of the activities of late Roman praetorian prefects.[24]

When royal laws increasingly changed the existing system of Roman law—the most blatant examples are the anti-Jewish laws enacted by Sisebut—the status of a Roman citizen lost even the rest of its practical significance. This trend can also be deduced from the tendency of Visigothic legislation to approximate the legal status of slaves and free clients of a patron.[25] Reccesvinth's code of 654 marked the end of the long evolution of royal law which had made the status of Roman citizen entirely obsolete. As this tendency had become increasingly obvious over a long period of time, its practical demise in 654 was not even mentioned explicitly.[26]

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[23] Vismara, "Leges Visigothorum", *LdMA* 5 (1991), 1804. According to recent studies the regulation that different groups or even each individual lived according to his or her own law only developed within the context of the multiethnic Carolingian empire; cf. Pohl, "Introduction: Strategies of Distinction", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 11. According to Theodoric the Great Goths and Romans should follow the same law code; see Cassiod. *var.* III, 13, 2 (CCL 96, 108): ... *nec permittimus discreto iure vivere quos uno voto volumus vindicare*; similarly *var.* VIII, 3, 4 (CCL 96, 303): ... *Gothis Romanisque apud nos ius esse commune.* Pohl-Resl showed that the applicability of Roman and Lombard law in the Lombard kingdom was not limited to specifically defined groups; therefore King Liutprand granted the right to opt freely for a specific kind of law in 727; cf. Pohl-Resl, "Legal Practice and Ethnic Identity in Lombard Italy", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 205–219.

[24] Collins, "Law and Ethnic Identity in the Western Kingdoms in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries", *Medieval Europeans*, Basingstoke *et al.* 1998, 6 and 17.

[25] García Moreno, "From Coloni to Servi", *Klio* 83 (2001), 198–212 and id., "Legitimate and Illegitimate Violence in Visigothic Law", *Violence and Society in the Early Medieval West*, Woodbridge 1998, 51. Already in the middle of the 5th century the position of slaves merged with the status of tenants; cf. ibid., 53. For similar developments in the Roman Empire see Geary, *The Myth of Nations*, Princeton/Oxford 2002, 66. For the lack of interest on the part of Gregory of Tours in the status of *cives Romani* in Merovingian Gaul see Keely, "Arians and Jews in the *Histories* of Gregory of Tours", *JMH* 23 (1997), 109f.

[26] Liebeschuetz, "Citizen Status and Law in the Roman Empire and the Visigothic

Ever since the Byzantines had interfered in struggles over Visigothic kingship in the 550s, they occupied parts of southern Spain, from where they were only evicted by King Suinthila in the 620s.[27] This conquest was part of Justinian's concept of *renovatio imperii*, which also led to the re-conquest of North Africa and Italy.[28] From the time of Leovigild onwards, Visigothic kings adopted titles, styles and ceremonies used at hellenistic and Byzantine courts.[29] Leovigild also founded a city, named Reccopolis after his son. Part of this growing acceptance of Byzantine traditions was the christianization of kingship; Leovigild's elder son Hermenegild started to mint coins during the rebellion against his father, which clearly show the religious dimension he claimed for his rule; his father later followed that example.[30]

Leovigild tried to unite all the Goths in an Arian church. With this aim in mind he convened an Arian synod at Toledo in 580, striving to facilitate conversions of Catholics; this was probably meant to counter the adverse effects produced by the conversion of his son Hermenegild to Catholicism during his rebellion.[31] The influence of kings on church

Kingdom", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 148.

[27] For the Byzantine conquest see Demandt, *Die Spätantike*, Munich 1989, 207; Claude, "Die diplomatischen Beziehungen zwischen dem Westgotenreich und Ostrom (475–615)", *MIÖG* 104 (1996), 13–25; Vallejo Girvés, "The Treaties between Justinian and Athanagild and the Legality of the Byzantine Possessions on the Iberian Peninsula", *Byzantion* 66 (1996), 208–218; ead., *Bizancio y la España tardoantigua (siglos V–VIII). Un capítulo de historia mediterránea*, Alcalá de Henares 1993 and García Moreno, "The Creation of Byzantium's Spanish Province. Causes and Propaganda", *Byzantion* 66 (1996), 101–119.

[28] For the concept of *renovatio* in late antiquity Girardet, "*Renovatio imperii* aus dem Geist des Christentums", *ZAC* 4 (2000), 102–115; Schneider, "Vor- und Frühformen einer *Renovatio Imperii* in christlichen Germanenreichen der Völkerwanderungszeit", ibid. 325–337.

[29] Isid. *hist.* 51 (Rodríguez Alonso, 258; Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 102); cf. Stroheker, "Leowigild", *Germanentum und Spätantike*, Zurich/Stuttgart 1965, 137. Since one of the tasks of Roman emperors had been to uphold traditional cult and religion so as to secure a stable basis for the commonwealth, this provided an opportunity for the interference of Visigothic kings in affairs of the church, whenever they chose to follow the imperial example; for the Roman model see now Huttner, "Der Kaiser als Garant sakraler Kontinuität. Überlegungen zu CIL III 709", *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 146 (2004), 193–201.

[30] Godoy/Vilella, "De la *fides gothica* a la ortodoxia nicena", *Los Visigodos. Historia y Civilización*, Murcia 1986, 130f. The first Barbarian king to strike gold coins after the imperial model was the Merovingian Theudebert I; cf. Stroheker, "Das spanische Westgotenreich und Byzanz", *Bonner Jahrbücher* 163 (1963), 267.

[31] John of Biclaro, *chron. ad a.* 580, 2 (ed. Campos: *Juan de Bíclaro. Obispo de Gerona*, Madrid 1960, 89f.; *chron.* 58: Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*,

affairs increased considerably after the 3rd council of Toledo; hailed as a new Constantine, who had presided over the council of Nicaea in 325, King Reccared appeared at this assembly that united representatives of the Hispano-Roman and the Gothic population.[32] The king declared unequivocally that his conversion had increased his own glory.[33] Moreover, in his *tomus fidei* he stated his intention to take responsibility for the religious well-being of his subjects.[34] The redactors of the acts of the council took care to highlight the providential mission of the king within the course of salvation history.[35]

It is no surprise that subsequent kings tried to emulate their illustrious predecessor in renewed attempts to glorify the royal office and dignity with explicit reference to an *imitatio imperii*, also in ecclesiastical matters.[36] The Byzantine emperor Justinian, trying to reconcile his "Monophysite" subjects, ordered the so-called three chapters to be condemned at the council of Constantinople in 553. In addition, the

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68). This source creates the impression that the king intervened directly in matters of doctrine. Formerly scholars tended to assume that Leovigild wanted to convert the entire Christian population of his realm; see Stroheker, "Leowigild", *Germanentum und Spätantike*, Zurich/Stuttgart 1965, 139 and Fontaine, "Conversion et culture chez les wisigoths d'Espagne", *La conversione al cristianesimo nell'Europa dell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 14 (1967), 88. Fontaine concludes from Leovigild's programme of *imitatio imperii*: "Il ne peut songer qu'à une unité totalitaire, à la fois politique et religieuse." (Ibid., 102). Other scholars have argued that the measures of the king were only directed at Goths who had converted to Catholicism; see Godoy/Vilella, "De la *fides gothica* a la ortodoxia nicena", *Los Visigodos. Historia y Civilización*, Murcia 1986, 124–126. The Catholic bishop Masona of Mérida, who was of Gothic descent, was expelled from his city; cf. Maya, "De Leovigildo perseguidor y Masona mártir", *Emérita* 62 (1994), 167–186. See also Linehan, *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain*, Oxford 1993, 27.

[32] John of Biclaro, *chron. ad a.* 590, 1 (Campos, 98): "… reviving in our own times the image of the ruler Constantine the Great, whose presence illumined the holy synod of Nicaea" (*chron.* 92: Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 75). After his conversion Reccared was addressed as *gloriosissimus, religiosissimus* and *sanctissimus princeps* and as *divino Flamine plenus* (see the *prooemium* to the acts of III Toledo: Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 50ff.). John of Biclaro had reserved the title *princeps* exclusively to the emperor before that council; see Teillet, *Des Goths à la nation gothique*, Paris 1984, 448 and 452 note 204.

[33] *Regis professio fidei* (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 53).

[34] Ibid., 54. According to King (*Law and Society in the Visigothic Kingdom*, Cambridge 1972, 132) the king was a "divinely sanctioned head" of a *societas fidelium Christi* after 589 (cf. Isid. *sent.* III, 49, 3; *LV* XII, 2, 15).

[35] Ramos Lissón, "Grégoire le Grand, Léandre et Reccarède", *Gregorio Magno e il suo tempo*, Rome 1991, I, 194.

[36] For the programme of *imitatio imperii* see Brennecke, "*Imitatio-reparatio-continuatio*. Die Judengesetzgebung im Ostgotenreich Theoderichs des Großen als *reparatio imperii?*", *ZAC* 4 (2000), 138f.

emperor compiled a kind of encyclical, the *confessio rectae fidei adversus tria capitula*, which was distributed throughout the empire. By contrast, Visigothic kings never tried to influence dogmatic controversies.[37]

Some scholars have advanced the opinion that it was Reccared who broke with the more or less tolerant attitude his Arian predecessors had adopted towards the Jews.[38] One canon adopted at the 3rd council of Toledo was meant to prevent Jews from having authority over Christians.[39] According to Schreckenberg, this was the first formulation of the principle of "forced conversion".[40] However, if the halakhic prohibition of mixed marriages was already in force at that time—as he assumes—, there cannot have been many cases where the legal prohibition applied.[41] Since marriages between Jews and Christians had already been prohibited by a law passed in 388, which was included in the *Codex Theodosianus* and the *Breviarium Alarici*,[42] Orlandis concludes

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[37] For the position of the eastern Roman emperor in the church see Dagron, *Empereur et prêtre. Étude sur le "césaropapisme" byzantin*, Paris 1996 and Castritius, "Zur Konkurrenzsituation zwischen Judentum und Christentum in der spätrömisch-frühbyzantinischen Welt", *Aschkenas* 8 (1998), 35f.

[38] Görres, "Das Judentum im westgotischen Spanien von König Sisebut bis Roderich (612–711)", *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie* 48 (1905), 354f. and Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews, III*, New York 1957, 36. See also Blumenkranz (*Juifs et chrétiens dans le monde occidental 430–1096*, Paris/La Haye 1960, 105f.), Albert ("Un Nouvel Examen de la Politique Anti-Juive Wisigothique", *REJ* 135, 1976, 17) and Suárez Fernández (*Judíos Españoles en la Edad Media*, Madrid 1980, 18). According to González Salinero the attitude of Catholic Gothic kings is only gradually different from the positions of their Arian predecessors, "una gradación en la misma dirección ideológica" ("Los judíos en el reino visigodo de época arriana", *Judaísmo Hispano*, Madrid 2002, 402).

[39] Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 120f; see also Linder, *The Jews in Legal Sources of the Early Middle Ages*, Detroit/Jerusalem 1997, 484f.

[40] *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos-Texte und ihr literarisches und historisches Umfeld (1.-11. Jh.)*, Frankfurt/M. and Bern 1982, 418f. For instances of attempts at forced conversions of Catholics to Arianism see Greg. Tur. *hist.* III, 10 (MGH, SRM, I, 1, 106f.) and *hist.* V, 38 (244). These isolated reports show at least that tolerance during the Arian period should not be exaggerated. For possible reasons for the negative description of queen Gosvintha, the instigator of one of these attempts, see Hillgarth, "La conversión de los visigodos", *AST* 34 (1961), 21–46, 6 note 12 and Nolte, "Gender and Conversion in the Merovingian Era", *Varieties of Religious Conversion in the Middle Ages*, Gainesville *et al.* 1997, 1997, 90. See also Nelson, "A propos des femmes royales dans les rapports entre le monde wisigothique et le monde franc à l'époque de Reccared", *Concilio III de Toledo. XIV centenario 589–1989*, Toledo 1991, 465–476.

[41] For the halakhic aspects see Juster, "The Legal Condition of the Jews under the Visigothic Kings", *Israel Law Review* 11 (1976), 568f.

[42] *CTh* III, 7, 2 (*LRV*: Haenel, 82).

that hardly anything new was added at the 3rd council of Toledo.[43] Indeed, Reccared even alleviated some anti-Jewish measures,[44] but on the other hand he was the first to decree the forced baptism of children born into mixed families.[45]

Sisebut (612–621) was the king who deviated most markedly from the Jewish policies of his predecessors.[46] Right at the beginning of his reign, in February or March 612, he enacted two laws imposing additional limitations on the Jews.[47] It is remarkable that the first of these edicts is directed to several bishops in southern Spain, without, however, mentioning Isidore of Seville, the leading metropolitan of the region. Afterwards the king ordered the forced baptism of all the Jews of his realm.[48] It is striking that this law—unlike the first two decrees—has not

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[43] Orlandis, *Die Synoden auf der Iberischen Halbinsel bis zum Einbruch des Islam*, Paderborn *et al.* 1981, 164.

[44] Juster, "The Legal Condition of the Jews under the Visigothic Kings", *Israel Law Review* 11 (1976), 583 f.

[45] González Salinero, *Las conversiones forzosas de los judíos en el reino visigodo*, Rome 2000, 23 ff., who highlights "la novedad y trascendencia de esta medida".

[46] Thompson (*The Goths in Spain*, Oxford 1969, 112), García Moreno (*Los Judíos de la España Antigua*, Madrid 1993, 142–144), Roth (*Jews, Visigoths and Muslims in Medieval Spain*, Leiden *et al.* 1994, 7) and Orlandis ("Hacia una mejor comprensión del problema judío en el reino visigodo católico de España", *Gli ebrei nell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 26, 1980, 155). For the date of Sisebut's rule cf. Collins, "Isidore, Maximus and the *Historia Gothorum*", *Historiographie im frühen Mittelalter*, Vienna/Munich 1994, 349, who assumes that his reign ended before November 620.

[47] *LV* XII, 2, 13–14 (MGH, LL, I, 1, 418–423). See Orlandis, "Hacia una mejor comprensión del problema judío en el reino visigodo católico de España", *Gli ebrei nell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 26 (1980), 159 and Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, Oxford 1969, 165.

[48] "At the beginning of his reign he forced the Jews into the Christian faith" (Isid. *hist.* 60; Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 105). *Qui* (sc. Sisebutus) ⟨*in*⟩ *initio regni* ⟨*sui*⟩ *Iudaeos ad fidem Christianam permovens* … (Rodríguez Alonso, 270–272); the words in brackets are only found in the earlier version of Isidore's *History of the Goths*. The *Continuatio Hispana* (*Chronica muzarabica* from 754) reads: *Sisebutus … Iudeos ad Christi fidem vi convocat* (ed. Juan Gil, Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum I, Madrid 1973, 19 f.). Several authors assume that this occurred in 613: Juster ("The Legal Condition of the Jews under the Visigothic Kings", *Israel Law Review* 11, 1976, 263), Adams ("Ideology and the Requirements of 'Citizenship' in Visigothic Spain: The Case of the *Judaei*", *Societas* 2, 1972, 321), Blumenkranz (*Juifs et chrétiens dans le monde occidental 430–1096*, Paris/La Haye 1960, 107), Cazier ("De la coercition à la persuasion", *De l'antijudaïsme antique à l'antisémitisme contemporain*, Lille 1979, 127), Roth (*Jews, Visigoths and Muslims in Medieval Spain*, Leiden *et al.* 1994, 13), Albert ("Un nouvel examen de la politique anti-juive wisigothique", *REJ* 135, 1976, 21: either in 612 or 613) and Rabello ("Sisebuto re di Spagna [612–621] ed il battesimo forzato", *Rassegna Mensile di Israel* 51, 1985, 36). By contrast, Orlandis (*La vida en España en tiempo de los godos*, Madrid 1991, 128 and 223), García Moreno (*Los Judíos de la España Antigua*, Madrid 1993, 116) and

come down to posterity; it was not included in subsequent codifications of Visigothic laws, which may be a reflection of later criticism.[49] We do not know under what circumstances the law was applied; neither is it clear whether the Jews were granted the alternative of exile, as is assumed by some scholars who take the expulsion in 1492 as a point of comparison.[50] Probably some Jews managed to stay in the Visigothic kingdom, even though they escaped baptism.[51] The ongoing existence of unbaptized Jews is also suggested by the criticism voiced by the fathers of III Seville at the beginning of the 620s.[52]

In Merovingian Gaul there are only reports about isolated cases of baptism or forced conversions of Jews.[53] The earliest credible report about the forced baptism of an entire community refers to events that happened in Clermont in 576.[54] In the Frankish reports there are

González Salinero (*Las conversiones forzosas de los judíos en el reino visigodo*, Rome 2000, 28) are in favour of dating these measures into the 4th or 5th year of his reign (616/17); they refer to Isid. *etym.* V, 39, 42: *[Huius quinto et quarto religiosissimi principis Sisebuti] Iudaei [in] Hispania Christiani efficiuntur* (ed. Lindsay, Oxford 1911, no pagination). However, since Sisebut only ruled for nine years, the 4th or 5th year should not be counted as the beginning of his reign. A further hint at his anti-Jewish measures can be found in the acts of III Seville (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 482f.) and IV Toledo; can. 57 of that synod refers to those who *ad Christianitatem venire coacti sunt, sicut factum est temporibus religiosissimi principis Sisebuti* (ibid. 235f.).

  [49] Perhaps no law was enacted at all; see Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, Oxford 1969, 166 and González Salinero, *Las conversiones forzosas de los judíos en el reino visigodo*, Rome 2000, 54.

  [50] For the alternative of exile see Juster ("The Legal Condition of the Jews under the Visigothic Kings", *Israel Law Review* 11, 1976, 263), Parente ("La controversia tra Ebrei e Cristiani in Francia e in Spagna dal VI al IX secolo", *Gli ebrei nell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 26, 1980, 541), Aloysius K. Ziegler (*Church and State in Visigothic Spain*, Washington 1930, 190), Williams ("The Jews and Christian Apologists in Early Spain", *CQR* 200, 1925, 277) and García Moreno (*Los Judíos de la España Antigua*, Madrid 1993, 116). The continuation of the chronicle of Marius of Avenches (*ad a.* 616) relates the flight of some Jews into the Merovingian kingdom: *Sisebotus Gothorum rex … Iudaeos sui regni subditos, praeter eos qui fuga lapsi sunt ad Francos, ad Christi fidem convertit* (PL 72, 801). More than 60 years later King Ervig passed a law which expressly prohibited the flight of Jews abroad (*LV* XII, 3, 9; MGH, LL, I, 1, 436f.).

  [51] Cazier, "De la coercition à la persuasion", *De l'antijudaïsme antique à l'antisémitisme contemporain*, Lille 1979, 132; against Blumenkranz, *Juifs et chrétiens dans le monde occidental 430–1096*, Paris/La Haye 1960, 109.

  [52] Drews, "Jews as Pagans? Polemical Definitions of Identity in Visigothic Spain", *EME* 11 (2002), 189–207.

  [53] Geisel, *Die Juden im Frankenreich*, Frankfurt/M. *et al.* 1998, 295.

  [54] In this case, as in Minorca in 418 (see *infra*, p. 250f.), baptism was confined to one community. See Stemberger, "Zwangstaufen von Juden im 4. bis 7. Jahrhundert— Mythos oder Wirklichkeit?", *Judentum—Ausblicke und Einsichten*, Frankfurt/M. *et al.* 1993, 88. For Clermont cf. Rouche, "Les baptêmes forcés de juifs en Gaule mérovingienne et

references to godparents of converted Jews; in some cases the king himself acted as godfather.[55] By contrast, Visigothic sources neither mention godparents nor attempts to integrate the newly converted Jews into the church and Christian society.

Sisebut's measures practically deprived the Jews of their status as a *religio licita*; formally his law was one of the royal enactments that interfered in the affairs of the Hispano-Roman population even before Reccesvinth's law code of 654. The question of the king's motives for taking such unprecedented action is hotly debated. Some scholars assume that he was driven by the expectation that the end of times was imminent; such a belief might have been provoked by the capture of Jerusalem by the Persians in 614, whose King Chosroes may have been interpreted as the Antichrist, all the more so as he was greeted as a liberator by Palestinian Jews.[56] However, in Sisebut's writings there is no hint that he had such expectations, nor are there indications that messianic movements arose among Spanish Jews at the beginning of the 7th century.[57] On the contrary, there is some evidence against the assumption that current political events contributed to a sharp increase in the religious convictions of the king. Shortly after the beginning of his reign he commissioned Isidore of Seville to write his treatise *de natura rerum*; as a token of gratitude the king himself composed an astronomical poem

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dans l'Empire d'Orient", *De l'antijudaïsme antique à l'antisémitisme contemporain*, Lille 1979, 105–124; Brennan, "The Conversion of the Jews of Clermont in AD 576", *JThS* 36 (1985), 321–337; Claude, "Gregor von Tours und die Juden. Die Zwangsbekehrungen von Clermont", *HJb* 111 (1991), 137–147; Reydellet, "La conversion des juifs de Clermont en 576", *De Tertullien aux Mozarabes*, Paris 1992, I, 371–379; Lotter, "La crainte du prosélytisme et la peur du contact: les Juifs dans les actes des synodes mérovingiens", *Clovis. Histoire et Mémoire*, Paris 1997, I, 849–879.

[55] Greg. Tur. *hist.* VI, 17 (MGH, SRM, I, 1, 286): … *ex quibus pluris excipit a sancto lavacro*. During the Saxon wars Charlemagne acted as godfather to his former enemy. For the political implications of baptism see Angenendt, "Taufe und Politik im frühen Mittelalter", *FMSt* 7 (1973), 143–168.

[56] Gil, "Judíos y cristianos en la Hispania del siglo VII", *Hispania Sacra* 30 (1977), 31f.; García Moreno, *Los Judíos de la España Antigua*, Madrid 1993, 147f.; Lotter, "Die Entwicklung des Judenrechts im christlichen Abendland bis zu den Kreuzzügen", *Judentum und Antisemitismus von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, Düsseldorf 1984, 49f. See also Díaz y Díaz, "Introducción general", *San Isidoro de Sevilla: Etimologías*, Madrid 1982, 54. By contrast, bishop Severus of Minorca does not adduce eschatological expectations as a justification for converting the Jews; he rather interprets his "success" as an indication that the end of times may be imminent; see *ep. Sev.* 31, 3f. (Bradbury, 124). In his report there are otherwise no references to chiliastic or eschatological concepts; see ibid., 46f.

[57] Gil, "Judíos y cristianos en la Hispania del siglo VII", *Hispania Sacra* 30 (1977), 79.

on the eclipse of the moon; both works approach nature from a rather sober, almost "scientific" angle, even though Isidore adds an allegorical interpretation of the natural phenomena under discussion. In view of the fact that in 611 there occurred two total eclipses of the moon and that on 2 August 612 there was a total eclipse of the sun,[58] these sober, almost detached analyses and explanations of natural phenomena by both authors give no backing to the hypothesis that the king was imbued with intense eschatological expectations.[59]

Sisebut was not only a successful military leader, who won victories against the Byzantines and peoples in the Pyrenees; he doubtless was also the most cultured and educated of all Visigothic kings.[60] The astronomical poem just mentioned[61] is a fairly correct representation of the classical astronomical tradition.[62] Sisebut was the first poet working in the capital of Toledo; among his creative successors is the metropolitan Eugenius II (646–657). The poem is an "answer" to Isidore's *de natura rerum*; both texts are also closely linked in manuscript tradition; Fontaine dates both works to 613.[63] He assumes that the "profane" works composed by Isidore were mainly written at the request of the king, who may have wanted to foster the distribution and reception of Isidore's treatise on nature by adding his own poem. The intellectual outlook of the king is highlighted by the fact that he took a fairly liberal attitude to "secular" culture.[64] In addition to the poem, Sisebut also

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[58] Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville: Traité de la Nature*, Bordeaux 1960, 4 f.

[59] Cf. ibid., 6: "C'est aussi pour calmer ces angoisses apocalyptiques qu'Isidore a écrit son opuscule."

[60] Orlandis, "Le royaume wisigothique et son unité religieuse", *L'Europe héritière de l'Espagne wisigothique*, Madrid 1992, 10: "Le plus éclairé de tous les monarques wisigoths". According to Wallace-Hadrill he was even "probably the most sophisticated of any barbarian king" (Wallace-Hadrill, *The Barbarian West*, London 1952, 124). For the education of other kings such as Chindasvinth and Reccesvinth cf. Riché, "L'enseignement et la culture des laïcs dans l'occident pré-carolingien", *La scuola nell'occidente latino dell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 19 (1972), 238.

[61] *Épître en vers*; ed. Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville: Traité de la Nature*, Bordeaux 1960, 328–335. For the example of Virgil and Lucretius chosen by Sisebut see Green, "Sisebuti Ecloga?", *VC* 32 (1978), 113–117. On the ideological background see Lof, "Der Mäzen König Sisebutus und sein *De eclipsi lunae*", *REA* 18 (1972), 145–151. See also Recchia, "Ancora sul *Carmen de luna* di Sisebuto di Toledo", *Invigilata Lucernis* 20 (1998), 201–219, and the earlier works by this author.

[62] Stach, "König Sisebut. Ein Mäzen des isidorianischen Zeitalters", *Die Antike* 19 (1943), 71.

[63] Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville: Traité de la Nature*, Bordeaux 1960, 3 and 151.

[64] Stach, "König Sisebut. Ein Mäzen des isidorianischen Zeitalters", *Die Antike* 19

wrote a Life of bishop Desiderius of Vienne, creating a contemporary Frankish "martyr",[65] as well as the hymn *de ratione temporum*.[66]

Sisebut was strongly influenced by ideals of Christian rulership. It is important to note in this connection that his predecessor Reccared had exerted a far greater influence on the conversion of the Visigoths to Catholicism than other Barbarian kings had done at the time of the christianization of their respective peoples.[67] As indicated above, John of Biclaro expressly compared Reccared to Constantine the Great. Under the influence of Byzantine models a Visigothic "ideology of kingship" started to evolve, which also incorporated elements of the political theory of Gregory the Great.[68] The underlying principle of this concept was the notion of *rex christianus*.[69] As early as in the acts of the 3rd Toledan council there is a reference putting God and king on the same level.[70]

The religious mission Sisebut conceived for himself is clearly visible in his letter to the Lombard King Adaloald, in which he tried to

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(1943), 72, whose approach is, however, not without problems, partly due to his overestimation of the position and cultural influence of the king. For Sisebut's "educational programme", directed at the spread of values among his subjects, see Fontaine, "King Sisebut's *Vita Desiderii* and the Political Function of Visigothic Hagiography", *Visigothic Spain. New Approaches*, Oxford 1980, 98f.; cf. ibid. 99 and 126 for the relationship between the king and Isidore.

[65] Ed. Gil, *Misc. Wisig.* 53–68. See Fontaine, "King Sisebut's" *Vita Desiderii*, 93–129 and Martín, "Verdad histórica y verdad hagiográfica en la *Vita Desiderii* de Sisebuto", *Habis* 29 (1998), 291–301.

[66] Ed. Strecker (MGH, poet. lat. IV/2, nr. 114, pp. 682–686).

[67] Orlandis, "Bible et royauté dans les conciles de l'Espagne wisigotho-catholique", *AHC* 18 (1986), 52.

[68] Reydellet, *La Royauté dans la littérature latine de Sidoine Apollinaire à Isidore de Séville*, Rome 1981, 477ff. and 498f. In a letter to the Merovingian Theuderic II the pope emphasizes the responsibility of rulers for church reform and the extirpation of heresy (*ep.* XI, 47; CCL 140 A, 945f.).

[69] In a letter to Pope Gregory Reccared stressed his concept of a "divine right of kings": … *nos gentesque nostras, quae nostro post Deum regimine moderantur* (Vives, *Concilios visigóticos e hispano-romanos*, Barcelona/Madrid 1963, 145).

[70] Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 73. For the notion of *rex orthodoxus et apostolicus* cf. Orlandis, "Bible et royauté dans les conciles de l'Espagne wisigotho-catholique", *AHC* 18 (1986), 53. The imperial epithet *christianissimus* was first applied to a Visigothic ruler at the 6th council of Toledo in 638; see Demougeot, "Grégoire le Grand et la conversion du roi germain au VIe siècle", *Grégoire le Grand. Actes du colloque Chantilly 1982*, Paris 1986, 200 note 12. However, this acclamation only follows an historiographic model, see John of Biclaro, *chron. ad a.* 590, 1 (Campos 98, 336; *chron.* 92: Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 74), who transfers the imperial title to Reccared. See Díaz y Díaz, "Más sobre epítetos regios en la Hispania visigótica", *Studi medievali* 19 (1978), 319–333.

persuade the king to embrace Catholicism instead of Arianism.[71] It is quite possible that Sisebut wanted to emulate Reccared as a self-appointed instrument of God.[72] Hillgarth considers Sisebut to be "a Byzantine type of ruler, above all concerned with orthodoxy".[73] Sisebut may even have thought of himself as a theologian, possibly at the same level as the emperor Justinian.[74] In his letter to the Lombard king, Sisebut put his culture at the service of his faith, and what is more, he wanted to contribute to the on-going conversion of Arians in Reccared's footsteps.[75] There is a clear reference to the notion of *imitatio imperii* in the letter: according to Sisebut, the Gothic "empire" thrives thanks to the activities of its Catholic rulers.[76] The king backed his own son Teudila in his desire to become a monk; he begged him to ensure his father's salvation by his prayers.[77] Probably this is not just theological rhetoric; indeed it seems that Sisebut was not sure of his own salvation, and it was precisely this insecurity that fuelled his efforts to propagate Catholic faith.[78] The king thought of himself as a *confessor*, and he understood this "mission" not just as a verbal declaration, but

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[71] *Misc.Wisig.* VIII, 19–27. However, Adaloald's mother had always been a Catholic, and the young king himself was baptized a Catholic, too. On the unclear religious situation in the Lombard kingdom see Geary, *The Myth of Nations*, Princeton/Oxford 2002, 125 and Fanning, "Lombard Arianism Reconsidered", *Speculum* 56 (1981), 214–258.

[72] Reccared had addressed the 3rd council of Toledo as follows: *Deus, cui placuit per nos eiusdem haeresis obicem depellere* (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 51).

[73] "Historiography in Visigothic Spain", *La storiografia altomedievale. Settimane di studio* 17 (1970), 285.

[74] Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique*, Paris 1959/83, 868 note 1. According to Fontaine, the literary activities of Barbarian kings were always part of their policies directed at *imitatio imperii*; cf. id., "Conversion et culture chez les wisigoths d'Espagne", *La conversione al cristianesimo nell'Europa dell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 14 (1967), 127.

[75] Ibid. 128. Sisebut's missionary endeavours may have been an imitation of the Byzantine emperors; Constantine had referred to himself as *episkopos tōn ektos*, i.e. he thought of himself as fulfilling episcopal duties. See Rapp, "Imperial Ideology in the Making. Eusebius of Caesarea on Constantine as 'bishop'", *JThS* 49 (1998), 685–695.

[76] *Gotorum viget imperium* (*Misc. Wisig.* VIII, 21).

[77] … *iugi oratione pro nostris sceleribus et immensis criminibus orare non pigeatis* … *Erit denique* … *nobis ante Deum remissio, si vestra pro nobis intercedat oratio* (*Misc. Wisig.* VII, 18). See also the following phrase: … *maiora tamen de vobis auxilia mihi provenire non dubito* (ibid., 16). Teudila was probably an illegitimate son; cf. Fear, "Introduction", *Lives of the Visigothic Fathers*, Liverpool 1997, XXIII.

[78] It is striking that Isidore warns against undue trust in one's own salvation, too (*sent.* I, 29, 7; CCL 111, 88).

as a duty to act accordingly.[79] The clear public profession of faith is to be made through works of charity (*opera caritatis*).[80]

With regard to his anti-Jewish measures it is remarkable that Sisebut apparently did not care to obtain ecclesiastical approval.[81] To all intents and purposes he felt sure of his royal office, which—according to his interpretation—gave him the power to act independently in religious matters and to enact laws for the protection of the church and in accordance with Christ's injunction to spread Christianity.[82] By contrast, later in the 7th century Gothic kings regularly sought the consent of the church before taking anti-Jewish measures. However, before 633 there existed no tradition of convening "national" church councils; the 3rd council of Toledo had been an exception, it did not initiate a "constitutional" practice; therefore Sisebut could not refer to any precedent that could have induced him to take ecclesiastical advice.[83]

Some scholars have advanced the opinion that Sisebut may have wanted to secure himself a social basis for his rule by ordering the forced baptism of the Jews. The king had not attained his office through dynastic tradition, but by election. He took his anti-Jewish decisions *omni cum palatino officio*, i.e. with the consent of the inner circle of his court.[84] It is safe to assume that there existed different parties among the elite of the kingdom, especially in view of the fact that there were frequent conflicts over the succession to the throne in the 6th and 7th centuries.[85] The *officium palatinum* will have counted loyal supporters

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[79] *Misc. Wisig.* VIII, 23; cf. Mt. 10, 32 and Luke 12, 8f.

[80] *Misc. Wisig.* VIII, 19.

[81] It should be noted that at the two provincial councils that took place under his reign (614 Egara, 619 II Seville) no anti-Jewish measures were adopted; cf. Saitta, *L'antisemitismo nella Spagna visigotica*, Rome ²1998, 41.

[82] For the role of Visigothic kings as heads of the Arian "national" church ("Herr der arianischen Stammeskirche") before 589 see Wolfram, *Geschichte der Goten*, Munich ³1990, 216. See now Valverde Castro, *Ideología, simbolismo y ejercicio del poder real en la monarquía visigoda: un proceso de cambio*, Salamanca 2000.

[83] García Iglesias, *Los Judíos en la España Antigua*, Madrid 1978, 137 and Orlandis, *Die Synoden auf der Iberischen Halbinsel bis zum Einbruch des Islam*, Paderborn *et al.* 1981, 144.

[84] *LV* XII, 2, 14 (MGH, AA, I, 1, 420, 14). The *officium palatinum*, which may have been modelled after the imperial *consistorium*, is mentioned for the first time during Sisebut's reign; however, it may have existend already under Leovigild; cf. Stroheker, "Das spanische Westgotenreich und Byzanz", *Bonner Jahrbücher* 163 (1963), 266. See also Díaz, "Visigothic Political Institutions", *The Visigoths. From the Migration Period to the Seventh Century*, Woodbridge 1999, 344f.

[85] For internal strife in the Visigothic kingdom, the growing spread of relationships of patronage and the increasing usurpation of royal justice by aristocratic landowners see García Moreno, "Legitimate and Illegitimate Violence in Visigothic Law", *Violence*

of the king among its members; however, there is no record that the anti-Jewish measures were designed to ensure the confiscation of Jewish property, which might have been transferred to the king's supporters.[86] Bachrach has advanced the hypothesis that Sisebut may have wanted to create a loyal party of supporters, made up of the former slaves of the Jews. However, he cannot have been without support before, because he had just been elevated to the throne. Moreover, it is inconceivable that "the Jews" opposed his election, because they were a politically and socially heterogeneous group; there was no "Jewish faction".[87] Nor were Jews a marginalized group, as we can see on the basis of those laws and conciliar canons that blame Christian laypeople and clergy for illegally offering support to the Jews. Therefore Sisebut cannot have been sure of unanimous support for his measures, not even among the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Since he cannot have foreseen his elevation, it is inconceivable that he should have executed a preconceived plan when enforcing his anti-Jewish measures.[88]

Other scholars have tended to explain Sisebut's policy by pointing to possible Byzantine parallels and models, especially measures taken by the emperor Heraclius.[89] However, in spite of the undeniable cultural

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and Society in the Early Medieval West, Woodbridge 1998, 46–59. For the hypothesis that forced conversions were meant to strengthen weak royal power see Linder, "Christlich-jüdische Konfrontation im kirchlichen Frühmittelalter", *Die Kirche des früheren Mittelalters*, Munich 1978, 419.

[86] Only a minority of scholars hold the opinion that Sisebut was moved by financial interests; see Ziegler (*Church and State in Visigothic Spain*, Washington 1930, 198) and Saitta (*L'antisemitismo nella Spagna visigotica*, Rome 1995, 42f.), who stresses the fiscal interest of the king in increasing the number of taxpayers, which would have risen by the influx of former Christian slaves of Jews.

[87] Bachrach, *Early Medieval Jewish Policy in Western Europe*, Minneapolis 1977, 8–11. Against Bachrach see Roth (*Jews, Visigoths and Muslims in Medieval Spain*, Leiden *et al.* 1994, 10), Albert ("Un nouvel examen de la politique anti-juive wisigothique", *REJ* 135, 1976, 4) and García Iglesias (*Los Judíos en la España Antigua*, Madrid 1978, 184f.). For social diversification among early medieval Jews see Lotter, "Zur sozialen Hierarchie der Judenheit in Spätantike und Frühmittelalter", *Aschkenas* 13 (2003), 333–359.

[88] Against Orlandis, *Historia de España: La España Visigótica*, Madrid 1977, 136f.

[89] Pérez de Urbel (*Isidor von Sevilla*, Cologne 1962 [Barcelona 1945], 193), Goubert ("Administration de l'Espagne Byzantine", *REB* 4, 1946, 120) and Rouche ("Les baptêmes forcés de juifs en Gaule mérovingienne et dans l'Empire d'Orient", *De l'antijudaïsme antique à l'antisémitisme contemporain*, Lille 1979, 118). Against the possible influence of Heraclius see Thompson (*The Goths in Spain*, Oxford 1969, 166 note 1) and González Salinero, *Las conversiones forzosas de los judíos en el reino visigodo*, Rome 2000, 30f. Albert ("Un nouvel examen de la politique anti-juive wisigothique", *REJ* 135, 1976, 22–25) points out that Byzantine influence had been there since Justinian's anti-Jewish laws. For possible Byzantine influence on *c.* 61 of IV Toledo see Saitta, "I giudei nella

influence of Byzantium, detectable at least since the days of Leovigild and Reccared, there is no evidence that Visigothic kings imitated political decisions taken by emperors. Around 615 Sisebut was conducting negotiations with the Byzantine patricius Caesarius that ended with the signing of a treaty.[90] Since the primary aim of the Byzantines was a peace treaty, they cannot possibly have induced Sisebut to embark on an entirely new course of religious policies at the same time, for which there was no Byzantine precedent anyway. It was only in the 630s that Heraclius passed his anti-Jewish laws; moreover, unlike Sisebut he did not initiate a wave of persecution throughout his realm; there is archaeological evidence for Jewish life in Palestine right into the Islamic period.[91]

In conclusion, the most probable motive that triggered Sisebut's actions were his religious convictions.[92] He felt sure that he was fulfilling his duties as a Christian ruler when he brought the Jews of his realm to Catholic faith, even by force. In his letter to the Lombard king he pointed to the example of his predecessor Reccared, who had converted the Arians that were allegedly struck by blindness; this in turn was supposed to have led to an invigoration of the Gothic empire.[93] It

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Spagna visigota. Da Suintila a Rodrigo", *Quaderni Catanesi* 5 (1983), 95 note 47. For the influence of Justinian's legal code on Spain see González Fernández, "Las cartas de Gregorio Magno al defensor Juan. La aplicación del derecho de Justiniano en la Hispania bizantina en el siglo VII", *Antigüedad y Cristianismo* 14 (1997), 287–298.

[90] Claude, "Die diplomatischen Beziehungen zwischen dem Westgotenreich und Ostrom (475–615)", *MIÖG* 104 (1996), 21 ff.

[91] Stemberger, "Zwangstaufen von Juden im 4. bis 7. Jahrhundert—Mythos oder Wirklichkeit?", *Judentum—Ausblicke und Einsichten*, Frankfurt/M. *et al.* 1993, 111. The edict of Heraclius, whose validity was, however, probably limited to Carthage, was passed in 632; cf. ibid., 107–110. In Isidore's lifetime only Sisebut initiated policies aiming at the forced conversion of Jews; later rulers and councils did not follow suit until 636, even though Heraclius's actions occurred precisely during that period. For earlier, probably local instances of forced conversions of Jews, which first occurred in the reign of Justinian in North Africa, see Avi-Yonah, *The Jews under Roman and Byzantine Rule*, Jerusalem 1984, 250 f. For a discussion of the possible influence of Heraclius on forced conversions allegedly decreed by the Merovingian Dagobert I at the instigation of the Byzantine emperor (Ps.-Fredegar, *chron.* IV, 65) see Geisel, *Die Juden im Frankenreich*, Frankfurt/M. *et al.* 1998, 340–357.

[92] Parkes (*The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue*, London 1934, 370), Díaz y Díaz ("Introducción general", *San Isidoro de Sevilla: Etimologías*, Madrid 1982, 54 note 145), Orlandis (*Historia de España. La España visigótica*, Madrid 1977, 139), Albert ("Un nouvel examen de la politique anti-juive wisigothique", *REJ* 135, 1976, 22) and Rabello ("Sisebuto re di Spagna ed il battesimo forzato", *Rassegna Mensile di Israel* 51, 1985, 37).

[93] *Postquam … orthodoxa fides mentibus cecatis emicuit, aucta pace catholicorum Domino commodante Gotorum viget imperium* (*Misc. Wisig.* VIII, 21).

should be remembered that from patristic times onwards the topos of the alleged blindness of the Jews had been a constant part of anti-Jewish polemics. When Sisebut directed this charge at Arian heretics, he made it clear that in his mind the conversions of heretics and Jews were in fact very close to each other. Even without ecclesiastical approval he felt entitled to enact laws on religious matters, feeling sure to be entrusted with the government of the church by God. Sisebut actively interfered with the designation of bishops, securing the investiture of "his" candidate as bishop of Barcelona.[94] Reccared had presented himself at the 3rd council of Toledo as a tool of God, who was allegedly commissioned to enhance the flock of the church.[95] This was probably taken as a model by Sisebut, all the more so as Pope Gregory the Great himself had stressed the eschatological significance of Reccared's merits.[96] A hint at the importance Sisebut attached to Reccared as his chosen model is the fact that he named his son and short-time successor after precisely this predecessor.

In the period of Sisebut's reign the notion of sacral kingship had barely started to develop; this process gained full momentum only after the 4th council of Toledo in 633,[97] having been prepared by works of Isidore of Seville such as his *sententiae*. This development culminated in the introduction of royal unctions, which were recorded for the first time in 672 at the inauguration of King Wamba. The praise Reccared received at the 3rd council of Toledo was based one a unique and basically irrepeatable accomplishment of this king, namely the conversion of his people to Catholicism. In the decades that followed the notion of sacral kingship and the ideology of Christian rulership were slow to develop. Therefore Sisebut could not rely on an established tradition

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[94] See the letter of the king to the metropolitan Eusebius of Tarragona, *Misc. Wisig.* VI, 15. For the generally subservient attitude of Visigothic bishops to the kings see Sánchez Albornoz, "El aula regia y las asambleas políticas de los godos", *CHE* 5 (1946), 86f.

[95] *Sicut enim divino nutu nostrae curae fuit hos populos ad unitatem Christi ecclesiae pertrahere* (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 59). Reccared was hailed as *novarum plebium in ecclesia catholica conquisitor* (ibid., 74). For the development of a religious notion of kingship among the Visigoths see Teillet, *Des Goths à la nation gothique*, Paris 1984, 548–552. For Reccared's position at the council see Díaz y Díaz, "Los discursos del rey Recaredo: El *Tomus*", *Concilio III de Toledo. XIV centenario: 589–1989*, Toledo 1991, 223–236.

[96] *... in illo tremendo examine ... ubi tua excellentia greges post se fidelium ducit, quos modo ad verae fidei gratiam per studiosam et continuam praedicationem traxit* (*ep*. IX, 229; CCL 140 A, 806).

[97] IV Toledo, *c*. 75 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 250).

such as a priest-like position of the king inside the church; he remained a layman, although empowered with privileges and responsibilities in sacred matters, as laid down in Roman tradition.

Sisebut's religious motives lay on two levels. First he was convinced that the propagation of Catholic faith was his duty as a Christian ruler, and second he hoped to increase his chances of personal salvation by winning new converts to the church. In his letter to the Lombard king he writes, without explicit reference to any specific case, that he is "lifted up" by the mighty joy of converts;[98] this may refer to the conversion of the allegedly Arian king he hopes for, but it is equally possible that this is an indirect hint at his "merits" as a converter of the Jews, if these occurred previously (as is probable, but not sure), perhaps also to the conversion of his son Teudila to a monastic life. As indicated above, Sisebut felt unsure about his personal chances of salvation, but apparently the forced baptism of the Jews had not dispelled all his doubts; therefore he was anxious to make more Catholic converts, this time among the Lombards. The different conversions achieved by his religious endeavours were meant to extend the kingdom of God, i.e. the church, on earth; Sisebut assumed this to be a treasure of good works that would demonstrate his faith before God and man.[99]

There is no evidence that the king passed his anti-Jewish measures at the instigation of the clergy or that he consulted Isidore of Seville beforehand.[100] The two men dedicated treatises and poems to each other, which is an indication of a certain intellectual appreciation, but not necessarily of political relations. It should be kept in mind that the episcopate formed no uniform body, but represented different inclinations and trends.[101] Therefore one should refrain from overestimating

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[98] … *de conversis opulenta exultatione substollimur* (*Misc. Wisig.* VIII, 19 f.).

[99] *Misc. Wisig.* VII, 16; following James 2, 17.

[100] Against Cazier, *Isidore de Séville et la naissance de l'Espagne catholique*, Paris 1994, 260: "… avec au moins la complicité passive d'Isidore, qu'il a dû consulter, étant donnés leurs rapports de confiance."

[101] Against Parkes (*The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue*, London 1934, 348): "Almost all the legislation affecting the Jews comes from those kings who were in close alliance with, or the tools of, the clerical party." Parkes contradicts himself when he has to admit "that the Jews were not necessarily unpopular with the rank and file of the population, or with the ordinary provincial and ecclesiastical authorities." (Ibid., 349). Therefore the so-called "clerical party" cannot have embraced all the "ecclesiastical authorities". In reality the episcopate comprised different parties and groups, as did the secular elite of the kingdom; cf. Heather, *The Goths*, Oxford and Cambridge/Mass.

the influence of ecclesiastical authorities on the Jewish policies of the kings before the 4th council of Toledo.[102] There was no "close union" of church and "state"; one should rather bear in mind differences between individual rulers as well as social distinctions among the clergy.[103] The prime responsibility for instigating the violent anti-Jewish policies lies with Sisebut, who did not take clerical advice; later church councils dealt "only" with problems resulting from his unprecedented actions.[104] It is undeniable that the Catholic church regarded itself as the only legitimate form of Christianity on Spanish soil, but it is doubtful that it actively encouraged missionary activities among Jews who had not previously been baptized and thus been brought under ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Church councils mainly dealt with *relapsi* and "new Christians".

It should be kept in mind that according to Augustine, who was accorded prime authority by Visigothic authors,[105] the Jews perform their mission in serving as witnesses to Christian truth.[106] Therefore one

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1996, 293: "The Spanish episcopate represents no separate force in the kingdom, but was appointed from the kingdom's elite, and hence reflected its general cultural outlook." For different regional and social loyalties within the episcopate see Linehan, *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain*, Oxford 1993, 36ff. See also ibid. 45 for a "breakdown of the corporate sense of the 630s" in the second half of the century.

[102] Against Collins, *Early Medieval Spain. Unity in Diversity*, New York ²1995, 132: "In the first half of the seventh century it is the Church that clearly took the initiative over the question of the Jews. With the exception of Sisebut, the kings appear luke-warm on the issue."

[103] For the notion of a close union of church and state see González Salinero, "Catholic Anti-Judaism in Visigothic Spain", *The Visigoths. Studies in Culture and Society*, Leiden *et al.* 1999, 126. For a more hesitant attitude towards the use of the term "state" see de Jong in the final discussion to *The Visigoths. From the Migration Period to the Seventh Century*, Woodbridge 1999, 522, who advocates a discussion of "two entities" within the state, i.e. within the same system. See also Linehan, "Impacto del III concilio de Toledo en las relaciones iglesia-estado durante el medioevo", *Concilio III de Toledo. XIV centenario 589–1989*, Toledo 1991, 428 ("episcopado-monarquía" instead of "Iglesia-Estado").

[104] King, *Law and Society in the Visigothic Kingdom*, Cambridge 1972, 124f. and Bachrach, *Early Medieval Jewish Policy in Western Europe*, Minneapolis 1977, 25. See also Baron (III, 44): "The more radical anti-Jewish canons of the Toledan Councils seem to have been enacted under royal prompting rather than on purely ecclesiastical initiative." See also Lotter, "Die Entwicklung des Judenrechts im christlichen Abendland bis zu den Kreuzzügen", *Judentum und Antisemitismus von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, Düsseldorf 1984, 49 and Letinier, "Le rôle politique des conciles de l'Espagne wisigothique", *RHDFÉ* 75 (1997), 617–626.

[105] Rubio, "Presencia de San Agustín en los escritores de la España romana y wisigoda", *CD* 200 (1987), 477–506.

[106] Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law*, Berkeley *et al.* 1999, 19–65. According to Fredriksen,

should not assume that the church convinced the king that the pres-
ence of Jews in Spain was one of the causes of political misfortunes.[107]
During Sisebut's reign, and especially at its start, when the anti-Jewish
laws were enacted, the Visigothic kingdom did not suffer any major
setbacks; on the contrary, the political aim of unifying the entire penin-
sula under Visigothic rule was successfully pursued during victorious
campaigns against peoples in the Pyrenees. As indicated above, Sise-
but acted independently of the church in appointing bishops and pass-
ing laws in ecclesiastical matters. It is safe to conclude with Wallace-
Hadrill: "The astonishing rigour of this persecution owed something to
the Church … but more to the kings themselves, who saw a threat to
their idea of Christian unity in the presence in Spain of so many *mauvais
sujets*."[108]

The desire to achieve political and religious unity was a major factor
in the anti-Jewish policies set in motion in Visigothic Spain. Leander
of Seville, Isidore's elder brother and predecessor, extolled the notion
of unity in his concluding sermon at the 3rd council of Toledo.[109] Since
the ideal of unity is already stressed in the preface to the acts of this
council,[110] the whole set of canons as handed down as a result of the
redaction of the text is "framed" by praise of this ideological concept.
Leander even adduces the order of nature as an analogy that is meant
to prove the superiority of unity.[111] In view of his desire to emulate

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"*Excaecati Occulta Justitia Dei*: Augustine on Jews and Judaism", *Journal of Early Christian
Studies* 3 (1995), 299–324, Augustine's position on Jews and Judaism had more to do with
Manichees than actual Jews.

[107] Against Albert, "*De Fide Catholica Contra Judaeos* d'Isidore de Séville", *REJ* 141
(1982), 314.

[108] Wallace-Hadrill, *The Barbarian West*, London 1952, 129.

[109] … *unanimiter unum omnes regnum effecti* (*Homilia in laudem ecclesiae;* Martínez Díez/
Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 159). There is a clear parallel to Justinian's
thinking on religious unity; the emperor considered unity in the true faith to be the
highest and most precious good for man on earth (*nov. Iust.* 132, *praef.*). See Fontaine,
"La homilía de San Leandro ante el Concilio III de Toledo: temática y forma",
Concilio III de Toledo. XIV centenario 589–1989, Toledo 1991, 249–270; Gómez Cobo,
"Matizaciones teológicas y políticas de Leandro de Sevilla a los discursos de Recaredo
en el Concilio III de Toledo", *Carthaginensia* 14 (1999), 1–30; id., "El *ordo verborum* en la
Homelia in laude Ecclesiae de Leandro de Sevilla. Incidencia en su teología", *Carthaginensia*
15 (2000), 249–274.

[110] … *unum gregem et unum pastorem instituit* (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección
canónica V, 74).

[111] … *unde quique ad unitatem venit, ex vitio ad naturam redit, … naturae est fieri ex pluribus
unitatem* (*Homilia in laudem ecclesiae*; ibid., 155).

Reccared in his religious policies it is therefore no surprise that Sisebut highlights the significance of the unity of faith in his letter to the Lombard king.[112]

However, the notion of unity always remained an ideal that hardly reflected reality in many cases and aspects. Internally the Visigothic kingdom always remained a heterogeneous territory, reaching as far as southern Gaul and comprising the settlements of the Basques who were never entirely subjected to Visigothic rule.[113] Although programmatically announced at the 4th council of Toledo, even the unification of liturgy was never successfully accomplished, as can be shown on the basis of different orders for the celebration of baptism.[114] Political unity was to be matched by a standardization of liturgy and a uniformity in the expressions of faith; this concept turned all those professing different creeds and holding different religious opinions into outsiders, who constituted a supposedly alien element in the religiously defined unified state. It is interesting to note that the unity of faith was mainly deduced from externally visible factors such as the uniform celebration of liturgy and the common recitation of the creed. Spiritual unity as well as the common ethical basis of everyday Christian practice were not entirely disregarded, but these "soft" factors could only

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[112] *Misc. Wisig.* VIII, 25. For the Constantinian notion of cultic unity as a precondition for a merciful Christian God see Girardet, "*Renovatio imperii* aus dem Geist des Christentums", *ZAC* 4 (2000), 111 f. For the concept of *unitas* in the early middle ages Erkens, "Einheit und Unteilbarkeit. Bemerkungen zu einem vielerörterten Problem der frühmittelalterlichen Geschichte", *AKG* 80 (1998), 269–295.

[113] Hillgarth, "Historiography in Visigothic Spain", *La storiografia altomedievale. Settimane di studio* 17 (1970), 351: "Depuis 589 on peut parler d'une *volonté* d'unité dans l'Espagne des Wisigoths." The otherwise excellent study by Claude, "Gentile und territoriale Staatsideen im Westgotenreich", *FMSt* 6 (1972), 1–38, overemphasizes the implementation of the officially proclaimed programme of unity; cf. ibid., 36. For the importance of regions as a dynamic factor in the history of 7th-century Spain and for the significance of local and regional interests see Collins, "Mérida and Toledo: 550–585", *Visigothic Spain. New Approaches*, Oxford 1980, 218.

[114] IV Toledo, *c.* 2 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 183). For the persistence of different baptismal rites in the 7th century see Glaue, "Zur Geschichte der Taufe in Spanien, I", *Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-hist. Kl.* 4/10 (1913). There are several differences between the baptismal practices observed in Toledo and Seville, which can be established by comparing the descriptions by Isidore of Seville and Ildefonse of Toledo; cf. ibid., 23. On the difference between unification and uniformity Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville. Genèse et originalité de la culture hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*, Turnhout 2000, 367.

with difficulty have been turned into visible signs of loyalty; the ideo-
logical concept of unity rather required a visible external sign of alle-
giance.[115]

The notion of unity was first taken up by Leovigild, who imitated a
Byzantine model.[116] After Reccared, who at least superficially achieved
the unity of the Christians throughout his realm, Sisebut made another
attempt to accomplish the definitive integration of all his subjects into
one church. It is interesting to note that, by contrast, the Carolingian
Louis the Pious did not extend his policies aiming at the unification
of his empire to the conversion of the Jews. During his reign various
synods adopted regulations that were meant to standardize church life,
but apparently the emperor did not consider the conversion of the
Jews a necessary prerequisite to achieve the unity of his realms. Of
course, the number of Jews in the Carolingian empire was far inferior
to the one in Visigothic Spain, but nonetheless it is remarkable that
the profession of Catholic faith was not marked out as the one and
only symbol of loyalty to the ruler, as had been the case in 7th-century
Visigothic Spain.

The desire to achieve unity and standardization sprang from the
wish to establish a well-ordered system of society, which would reflect
the ideal cosmic order. This concept was also the driving force behind
the unification of legal practice finalized by Reccesvinth in 654. In
this connection the king pointed out that laws bring about harmony
among the subjects, which would in turn result in victories over ene-
mies.[117] When seen from this perspective the mere existence of Jews
could appear to be a "permanent anomaly" (Peter Brown), it could be
presented as a disturbance of order, a threat to royal authority, which
could appear as neglecting its mission of being a reflection and earthly
representation of divine order. The notion of kingship founded on and
measured against this concept of external uniformity of religious prac-
tice betrays a feeling of internal insecurity, of permanent fear to fall
short of the requirements of cosmic order. It is in sharp contrast to the

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[115] By contrast, early Christians cherished an entirely spiritual notion of unity that
did not require an external *signum*; cf. Eph. 4, 3–5. For the early church see Lilienfeld,
Einheit der Kirche in vorkonstantinischer Zeit, Erlangen 1989.

[116] Stroheker, "Das spanische Westgotenreich und Byzanz", *Bonner Jahrbücher* 163
(1963), 267. See also Wallace-Hadrill, *The Barbarian West*, London 1952, 131. Justinian
maintained that unity in the true faith was the most valuable thing on earth (*nov. Iust.*
132, *praef.*).

[117] *LV* I, 2, 6 (MGH, LL, I, 1, 42).

pragmatic Augustinian theory according to which the Jews serve as wit-
nesses to the Christians, fulfilling a positive function within Christian
society.

When King Suinthila was overthrown by the usurper Sisenand, the
latter was anxious to secure the support of the church; therefore he
convened a national council, the first to be held after the 3rd council
of Toledo in 589. The 4th Toledan council, which took place under
the presidency of Isidore of Seville in 633, unwillingly endorsed the
usurpation, but it formulated regulations for royal succession that were
meant to forestall such incidents in the future. The fathers of the coun-
cil expressed misgivings at Sisebut's violent anti-Jewish policies, but they
attached more importance to the dignity and integrity of Christian
sacraments than to the value of free conversion to Christianity. Thus
they declared that since forcefully baptized Jews had already received
the eucharist they had been incorporated into the mystical body of
Christ; the *character indelebilis* of the sacrament was interpreted to be tan-
tamount to a final and irrevocable conversion to Christianity, making
any return to Judaism impossible. In future, however, forced baptism
was interdicted.[118]

In spite of this clear injunction the 6th council of Toledo again
ordered the forced baptism of the remaining Jews in 638. King Chintila
was requested not to tolerate the persistence of non-Christian subjects
in his territories.[119] In addition, the Jews of Toledo were required to
sign a *placitum*, in which they committed themselves to live as faithful
Christians, promising to avoid any contact with unbaptized people and
to hand over their scriptures to the Christian authorities.[120] An element
of force is present in the very term *placitum*, as had been indicated by
Isidore in his definition of the term.[121]

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[118] Linder, *The Jews in Legal Sources of the Early Middle Ages*, Detroit/Jerusalem 1997,
485–491.

[119] *c*. 3 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 304f.). Isidore of Seville
was already dead at this time, which may be an indication that he had exerted a
mitigating influence on the treatment of the question of forced baptisms at the 4th
council; see Williams, "The Jews and Christian Apologists in Early Spain", *CQR* 200
(1925), 280.

[120] *Confessio Iudaeorum*, PL Suppl. 4, 1664–1669. For the date (December 637) see
Orlandis, *Die Synoden auf der Iberischen Halbinsel bis zum Einbruch des Islam*, Paderborn *et
al.* 1981, 179. See also González Salinero, *Las conversiones forzosas de los judíos en el reino
visigodo*, Rome 2000, 58–70.

[121] *etym.* V, 24, 19: … *placitum vero etiam nolens compellitur.*

Until the end of the 7th century, anti-Jewish laws and canons were repeatedly issued by successive kings and councils. Christians offering support to Jews were threatened with severe punishments, which is an indication that anti-Jewish sentiment, although doubtless present in everyday practice and propagated by official ideology, was not paramount on the agenda of every Christian inhabitant of the kingdom. Despite anti-Jewish injunctions Judaism continued to be attractive for some Christians. At the beginning of the century bishop Aurasius of Toledo complained about count Froga, who had allegedly taken action against Jews who had previously converted to Christianity.[122] This incident of a sympathetic attitude taken by a Christian towards Jews is outdone by a reference in Julian of Toledo's *insultatio*, who blames several Christians for having converted to Judaism during the rebellion against King Wamba in the Gallia Narbonnensis around 673.[123]

These isolated hints should warn us that anti-Jewish sentiment must not be taken for granted, neither in every section of the population nor at all times; Visigothic Jews were no marginalized minority, but part and parcel of society, which was, however, involved in a process of redefining and reshaping its identity.[124] The main parameters of Gothic identity were changing since the 3rd council of Toledo, and at the same time the old concept of (provincial) Roman identity was gradually weakening. The Jews were the group most negatively affected by that transition, and it is the purpose of the following study to shed some light on the question how the leading intellectual of Visigothic Spain influenced and reacted to that process.

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[122] *Misc. Wisig.* XVIII, 48. See also the *scholion ad epist. Aurasii* (ibid., 49); the editor Gil considers this *scholion* to be a forgery. It should be noted that Froga is given the title *comes* only in that spurious text. According to the *scholion* the bishop converted the Jews by his sermons (*continuis exhortationibus suis*); however, the archisynagogus casts doubts on this, charging the bishop with deception. The letter of Aurasius (who held office from 603 to 615) is dated by some scholars into the period of the anti-Jewish measures of Sisebut; see Thompson (*The Goths in Spain*, Oxford 1969, 167), García Moreno (*Los Judíos de la España Antigua*, Madrid 1993, 145) and García Iglesias (*Los Judíos en la España Antigua*, Madrid 1978, 109f.). However, if the reference to the preaching activities of the bishop is correct, the conversions must have occurred before Sisebut ordered the forced baptisms.

[123] *Insultatio* (CCL 115, 245).

[124] See *infra*, chapter 4.3.

ISIDORE OF SEVILLE'S *DE FIDE CATHOLICA CONTRA IUDAEOS*

2.1. *Structure*

The two books of Isidore's *de fide catholica contra Iudaeos* have different topics: the first one addresses christological problems, while the second discusses the church, principally as a church gathered among the gentiles. The first four chapters of the first book are devoted to the divine nature of Christ, while his human nature is treated in no less than 46 chapters. There is no focus on anti-Arian argument, as might have been expected. The second book is shorter; it discusses the calling of gentiles and Jews to faith, the alleged reprobation of the latter, the supposed emptiness of Jewish religious customs, as well as problems of biblical exegesis and Christian sacraments. Baptism is analyzed in three chapters, while the eucharist is treated in only a single one; probably communion is presented as the last and final stage of the rite of initiation into Christianity. This comparatively extensive treatment of baptism may be due to the past differences between Arians and Catholics regarding baptismal rites.

In the second book Isidore discusses the calling to faith, as well as holy scripture as a document of revelation and the sacraments as visible signs of the covenant, but he fails to address the question how faith can be transmitted to the "unfaithful"; there is no reference whatsoever to the first step of the process of initiation, the catechumenate. Regarding the Jews, Isidore repeatedly stresses that without faith they cannot understand scripture correctly. However, the question how Jews may be brought to faith remains unanswered; faith may be awakened by baptism or preaching, but remarkably no chapter of the second book is devoted to homiletics. By contrast, in his treatise *de natura rerum* Isidore refers to baptism and preaching as characteristic aspects of the practice

of the church.[1] When he discusses the seven liberal arts in the *Ety-mologies* he devotes an entire chapter to rhetoric. Isidore was not only acquainted with the homiletic tradition of the ancient church, first of all with the sermons of African fathers such as Cyprian and Augustine; he was himself a gifted preacher[2] who was anxious to provide his clergy with adequate rhetorical preparation during their education in cathedral and parish churches, whose reorganization was one of his main objectives as a metropolitan bishop.[3] The underlying principle of his most renowned work, the encyclopaedia (*Etymologies*), namely to elucidate the history and meaning of a term on the basis of the *etymon*, is another indication of the high esteem in which he held words and verbal communication. In the first book of *de fide catholica*, one chapter treats the sending out of the apostles *ad praedicandum*. Therefore it is surprising that the second book fails to address the question of preaching alongside the discussion of scripture and the sacraments. In his allegorical exposition of the Pentateuch Isidore establishes a close connection between faith and preaching.[4] Since he addresses the apostolic mission and the foundation of the primitive church by the word in the first book of his anti-Jewish treatise, a discussion of preaching might have been expected in the second. The failure to include homiletics and the catechumenate in his exposition has a bearing on Isidore's position on forced baptism, which will be discussed below.

Apparently Isidore relied on earlier collections of testimonies, which he included in his work; not in all cases do these testimonies serve his argument, and he might have adduced additional prooftexts. However, his treatise is no incoherent composition.[5] The plan of the work is entirely of Isidore's own devising, even if the existing collections of tes-

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[1] *nat. rer.* 18, 8 (Fontaine, 243).

[2] In his *renotatio* Braulio stresses Isidore's ability to adapt his rhetorical style to changing audiences (Lynch/Galindo, 356; Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville. Genèse et originalité de la culture hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*, Turnhout 2000, 431). Ildefonse of Toledo points to Isidore's intellectual and rhetorical brilliance, but it is not sure whether he knew him personally at all (Ild. Tol. *vir. ill.* VIII; Codoñer, 128).

[3] For different levels of schools (cathedral, parish, monastic) see Riché, *Éducation et culture dans l'occident barbare*, Paris 1962, 324–350. The basic model of preaching was provided by the Apostles' Creed (Isid. *eccl. off.* II, 23, 2; CCL 113, 98). For the tradition of preaching in the Spanish church see Tovar Paz, *Tractatus, sermones atque homiliae: El cultivo del género del discurso homilético en la Hispania tardoantigua y visigoda*, Cáceres 1994.

[4] *quaest. in Ex.* 56, 3 (PL 83, 316).

[5] Against Blumenkranz, *Les auteurs chrétiens latins du moyen-âge sur les juifs et le judaïsme*, Paris/La Haye 1963, 94.

timonies did not always fit very well into his categories. Unlike Cyprian of Carthage, the author of the most important patristic collection of anti-Jewish testimonies (*ad Quirinum*),[6] Isidore occasionally presents large passages of his own exegesis. Following earlier works forming part of the literature *adversus Iudaeos*, Isidore discusses the three traditional themes: christology, criticism of the Torah, and replacement of the Jews by the "gentiles".[7] Compared to the works of Tertullian and Cyprian,[8] Isidore reverses the order; these two authors discuss the rejection of Israel and the alleged abolition of its law first. The first book of Cyprian's collection of testimonies *ad Quirinum* addresses two issues: the replacement of Israel by the church and the ensuing necessity that Jews accept baptism; significantly, this last topic is entirely absent from Isidore's *de fide catholica*.

The structure of this treatise can give us some clues regarding possible addressees. The divinity of Christ is discussed very briefly, which is unusual if the text should have been written to convert Jews.[9] The chapters dealing with the alleged abolition of the commandments of the old covenant are equally short; some of the principal Jewish feasts that were no longer celebrated by the church, such as the Day of Atonement and the New Year, are not discussed at all. By contrast, the story of Christ's passion receives extensive treatment, as does the exposition of the calling of the gentiles. Equally central are the chapters treating the Christian sacraments, although they receive slightly less attention. This quantitative analysis shows that some questions that had been controversial between Jews and Christians for centuries do not receive much attention. By contrast, topics that are first and foremost relevant for baptized Christians such as the passion narrative and the Christian sacraments are moved into focus; these issues are, however, less relevant when it comes to convincing Jews of the truth of Christianity.

Isidore was aware of the differences between literary genres, as we can tell by his definitions contained in the *Etymologies*. A treatise is

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[6] The authenticity of Cyprian's authorship is questioned by Bobertz, "An Analysis of *Vita Cypriani* 3.6–10 and the Attribution of *Ad Quirinum* to Cyprian of Carthage", *VC* 46 (1992), 112–128.

[7] For the topics discussed in the literature *adversus Iudaeos* see Simon, *Verus Israel*, Paris 1948, 188.

[8] Tertullian, *adversus Iudaeos*, ed. Tränkle, Wiesbaden 1964; Cyprian of Carthage, *ad Quirinum (testimoniorum libri tres)*, ed. Weber, CCL 3, Turnhout 1972, 1–179.

[9] Against Cazier, *Isidore de Séville et la naissance de l'Espagne catholique*, Paris 1994, 153, according to whom the divinity of Christ is the main topic of the work.

confined to the discussion of one topic alone, which should be treated
from different angles. By contrast, an apology is merely defensive,
limiting itself to re-acting argument, answering precise objections.[10]
Therefore an apology is no systematic exposition but a literary defence
in a concrete situation.[11] Catechetical works are not meant to convince
the "unfaithful" of the Christian truth, their aim is rather to instruct
people who desire an introduction into the Christian faith of their
own volition.[12] While polemical works are meant to fight and degrade
the enemy, missionary texts try to convince the addressees (Goodman's
"proselytizing mission"), not to fight them.[13]

Isidore's treatise *de fide catholica* tries to prove that both Catholic doc-
trine and the content of the gospel are in accordance with prophecies of
the Old Testament. In this respect his work matches his own definition
of a *tractatus*, being *unius rei multiplex expositio*. The detailed exposition of
a problem brings the work close to his definition of a "book" as put
forward in the *Etymologies*.[14] Only in certain passages does his exposi-
tion meet his own definition of an apology, when he answers questions
and objections of imaginary Jewish adversaries. Yet these are no ques-
tions which could have been asked by "real" Jewish opponents, being
merely rhetorical devices put forward to serve the author's own argu-
ment.

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[10] *Tractatus est unius rei multiplex expositio, eo quod trahat sensum in multa sentiendi contractando
secum* (*etym*. VI, 8, 3). *Apologeticum est excusatio, in quo solent quidam accusantibus respondere. In
defensione enim aut negatione sola positum est* (*etym*. VI, 8, 6). Cf. Chaparro Gómez, "Isidoro
de Sevilla y los géneros literarios", *Excerpta Philologica* 1 (1991), 176ff.

[11] See Julian of Toledo's *Apologeticum de tribus capitulis* (CCL 115, 127–139). For apolo-
getics in the ancient church see Kinzig, "Der 'Sitz im Leben' der Apologie in der Alten
Kirche", *ZKG* 100 (1989), 291–317 and Fredouille, "L'apologétique chrétienne antique:
naissance d'un genre littéraire", *REA* 38 (1992), 219–234. For "apologetic defense" in
the New Testament see Luke 12, 11; 1 Pt. 3, 15 and Phil. 1, 16. The literarization of the
originally judicial genre started with Tertullian.

[12] 1 Cor. 14, 19; Luke 1, 4; 2 Clem. 17, 1.

[13] For terminological distinction see Goodman, *Mission and Conversion. Proselytizing in
the Religious History of the Roman Empire*, Oxford 1994, 3f. Goodman singles out four
ideal types of "mission": information, education, apology and conviction; only the
latter aims at acquiring converts. For a distinction of apologetics ("témoignage") and
mission ("propagande convertisseuse") cf. Will/Orrieux, *"Prosélytisme juif?" Histoire d'une
erreur*, Paris 1992, 16f., 172 and 187ff.; see also Rokéah, "Ancient Jewish Proselytism
in Theory and Practice", *ThZ* 52 (1996), 206–224. For a confusion of missionary and
apologetic purposes see Molland, "Besaß die Alte Kirche ein Missionsprogramm und
bewußte Missionsmethoden?", *Kirchengeschichte als Missionsgeschichte*, I, Munich 1974, 60.
Cohen distinguishes carefully between anti-Jewish polemic and "mission to the Jews";
cf. Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law*, Berkeley *et al.* 1999, 40.

[14] *Tomi vero, id est libri, maiores sunt disputationes* (*etym*. VI, 8, 2).

In antiquity four different types of anti-Jewish works were composed: letters, dialogues, treatises, and collections of testimonies.[15] Isidore's work shows characteristics of the latter two categories; therefore it should be regarded as a synthesis of different aspects of several literary genres that had developed in antiquity, but which the author adapted to his own purposes.[16] As in the 7th century there was probably no direct intellectual exchange and interaction between Jews and Christians,[17] Isidore did not choose the genre of dialogue, which had been used as the main literary form for the exposition of philosophical and later also theological ideas throughout antiquity.[18] The extant letters from Visigothic Spain hardly deal with exegetical and dogmatic problems; therefore Isidore may not have thought the epistolary genre appropriate for the discussion of a topic of general interest. Combining features of a treatise and a collection of testimonies he devised the form most suitable for a broader audience. When put into the context of exegetical literature,[19] it becomes clear that his work is neither a commentary nor a sermon meant to be delivered orally. There are only very occasional parallels to the genre of *quaestiones* (*erotapokriseis*). The only possible solution is to categorize the work as a *tractatus*, which is characterized by the systematic subordination of exegesis to a given topic. However, like Isidore's other works, his treatise *de fide catholica* is not devoted to the discussion of a special theological question, such as the virginity of Mary or the Trinity. As always, he is anxious to address a topic of general interest, which he discusses from as broadly a perspective as possible.

In general, scholars date the composition of *de fide catholica* into the years 614/15, assuming that Braulio of Zaragoza arranged the cata-

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[15] Dahan, *Les intellectuels chrétiens et les juifs au moyen-âge*, Paris 1990, 340. In his work *La polémique chrétienne contre le judaïsme au moyen-âge*, Paris 1991, 94, Dahan mentions sermons as a fifth genre.

[16] Already Gregory of Nyssa combined elements of creed, apologetics and polemics against heretics in his *oratio catechetica*; cf. Hall, "Glaube (Alte Kirche)", *TRE* 13 (1984), 307.

[17] See *infra*, p. 126f.

[18] The pseudo-Augustinian *altercatio Ecclesiae et Synagogae*—probably written in the 5th century—pretends to be a dialogue, but in fact the Synagogue merely serves as an addressee of the exposition of the doctrine of the Church. There are no extant works written in dialogue form from 7th-century Spain.

[19] For different genres of exegetical literature see Scholten, "Titel—Gattung—Sitz im Leben. Probleme der Klassifizierung antiker Bibelauslegung am Beispiel der griechischen Hexaemeronschriften", *Stimuli. Exegese und ihre Hermeneutik in Antike und Christentum*, Münster 1996, 254–269.

logue of Isidore's works, which he presents in his *renotatio*, in chrono-
logical order.[20] Braulio was possibly a student, but surely a close friend
of Isidore's, therefore it is not unreasonable to assume that he knew
in which order the works of the latter had been composed.[21] On the
basis of this assumption it is possible to establish a relative chronol-
ogy; with the help of a few absolute dates, scholars have arrived at a
hypothetic dating of Isidore's entire œuvre. The treatise *de fide catholica*
would have been composed during Sisebut's reign, most probably after
the two extant anti-Jewish laws had been passed right after the king
ascended the throne in 612, when the Jews were not yet required to
adopt Christianity.[22] By contrast, Williams wanted to date the treatise to
the end of Isidore's lifetime, to the year 633, probably to establish a link
with the 4th council of Toledo; however, there is no evidence that could
substantiate this theory.[23] Among more recent scholars only Saitta fol-
lows this approach; according to him the wording of the canons passed
at this council "exactly" reflects Isidore's language in his treatise against
the Jews.[24]

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[20] Braul. Caesaraugust. *renotatio Isidori*, ed. Lynch/Galindo, in: iid., *San Braulio. Obispo
de Zaragoza*, Madrid 1950, 356–361; repr. with emendations by Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville.
Genèse et originalité de la culture hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*, Turnhout 2000, 431–433.

[21] For dating the works see Aldama, "Indicaciones sobre la cronología de las obras
de S. Isidoro", *Miscellanea Isidoriana*, Rome 1936, 57–89. According to Aldama the anti-
Jewish measures of Sisebut, which he dates between 612 and 614, coincide neatly with
the years 614/15 traditionally assumed to be the period during which Isidore wrote *de
fide catholica*; cf. also Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law*, Berkeley *et al.* 1999, 115 ("written in
tandem with Sisebut's conversion decree"). See also González Salinero, *Las conversiones
forzosas de los judíos en el reino visigodo*, Rome 2000, 121. For differing views on dating
Isidore's works see Vega, "Cuestiones críticas de las biografías isidorianas", *Isidoriana*,
León 1961, 81–83. For the proposal to date the *sententiae* into the final stage of Isidore's
life see Cazier, "Les Sentences d'Isidore de Séville et le IVe Concile de Tolède", *Los
Visigodos. Historia y Civilización*, Murcia 1986, 377 and id., "Derrière l'impersonnalité des
Sentences. Aperçus sur la personnalité d'Isidore de Séville", *De Tertullien aux Mozarabes*,
Paris 1992, II, 9.

[22] Cohen concludes that the treatise was composed "precisely at the time of Sisebut's
decree that the Jews must convert to Christianity (614–615)" (*Living Letters of the Law*,
Berkeley *et al.* 1999, 106f.). However, this exact coincidence cannot be established with
any degree of certainty, and Isidore's expectation that the Jews will convert only at the
end of times clearly contradicts Sisebut's policies.

[23] Williams, *Adversus Judaeos*, Cambridge 1935, 217.

[24] Saitta, "I giudei nella Spagna visigota. Da Suintila a Rodrigo", *Quaderni Catanesi*
5 (1983), 88f. and id., *L'antisemitismo nella Spagna visigotica*, Rome ²1998, 51. According
to Blumenkranz (*Juifs et chrétiens dans le monde occidental 430–1096*, Paris/La Haye 1960,
82) the work would have been composed shortly after 620, but no evidence is given for
that assumption. For a possible new argument that could add weight to the traditional
dating see *infra*, p. 174.

Both in the *epistola dedicatoria* preceeding the first book and in the preface to the second one Isidore mentions his sister Florentina, to whom he dedicated his work. She had also been the recipient of the treatise *de institutione virginum* composed by their elder brother Leander, Isidore's predecessor as metropolitan of Seville. Only once does Isidore address his sister directly,[25] and this is just a brief recapitulation of the argument, followed by a hint concerning the continuation; it is in no way a turning point in the argument, since the passage is put between the discussion of sabbath and circumcision. It is not very carefully formulated anyway, since Isidore has already concluded his discussion of the sabbath, in contrast to his annunciation that he is about to refute the allegedly carnal celebrations of the Jews, which might reasonably have included the sabbath. This passage offers no clue as to the interest of Florentina in the matter.

The *epistola dedicatoria* reads: *Haec ergo, sancta soror, te petente, ob aedificationem studii tui tibi dicavi, ut qua consorte perfruor sanguinis, cohaeredem faciam et mei laboris.*[26] Florentina had chosen to lead the life of a consecrated virgin, probably following the advice of her elder brother Leander.[27] Isidore alludes to the religious state of his sister by calling her *sancta soror*. She lived in a community in Seville or in the surrounding area.[28] There is no conclusive evidence that it was a domestic monastery or a sort of *Eigenkloster* on family property.[29] Visigothic sources distinguish *virgines* and *monachae*; the former often led an ascetic life outside monasteries in the homes of their families. Nowhere is Florentina referred to by the latter term, she is always a *virgo*, which leaves the possibility that she was a consecrated virgin living on family property. The admonitions of her brother Leander may substantiate this assumption, because in his treatise *de institutione virginum* he repeatedly warns his sister not to make contact with men or married women (these are the topics of the first two chapters of the "rule" proper), which may be an indication that she did not lead a secluded life in a monastery. On the other hand,

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[25] *fid. cath*. II, 16, 1 (PL 83, 524).

[26] *fid. cath*., *praef*. (PL 83, 449 f. with emendation following Ziolkowski, 1).

[27] Leand. *inst. virg*., *praef*. (Campos Ruiz, 30). The funeral inscription of the three reads: *Florentina soror Deo vota perennis* (Vives, *Inscripciones cristianas de la España romana y visigoda*, Barcelona 1942, 272, 3).

[28] In the *Acta Sanctorum* (5 June) there is a Life of Florentina, which does not contain any reliable evidence.

[29] Séjourné assumes that her monastery was situated at the home of the family, see *Saint Isidore de Séville. Le dernier père de l'église*, Paris 1929, 23.

Leander's argument presupposes the existence of a community of several virgins, which may be a hint at a domestic monastery. In the 26th chapter he warns his sister not to imitate those virgins who live in cities in separate rooms. When he wrote his monastic treatise, Florentina was already living according to a rule.[30]

We do not know at what age Florentina joined the community of virgins she lived in. This must certainly have happened before Leander's death, which occurred around 600.[31] In all probability she had been living for several years, possibly decades, as a consecrated virgin when she asked her younger brother for his treatise *de fide catholica*. According to Isidore she dedicated herself to edifying studies, which means that she read the holy scriptures; she may have been dealing with other theological matters also. In his treatise *de institutione virginum* Leander admonishes his sister to pray and read; during manual labour the virgins are required to listen to readings from the Bible or from the fathers.

Florentina was capable to read for herself, without clerical guidance. Leander places prayer and divine reading side by side.[32] He tells his sister that actions reported in the Old Testament have to be understood spiritually.[33] Traditionally, biblical hermeneutics was the culmination of

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[30] Leand. *inst. virg.* 23 (Campos Ruiz, 64). The earliest evidence for the existence of consecrated virgins on Iberian soil is found in the acts of the council of Elvira (first decade of the 4th century; *cc.* 13 and 27); see Ramos Lissón in id. and Orlandis, *Die Synoden auf der Iberischen Halbinsel bis zum Einbruch des Islam*, Paderborn *et al.* 1981, 16 note 67. Canon 8 of the first council of Zaragoza (380) establishes the 40th year as the age for receiving consecration. This regulation was endorsed in 506 (*c.* 19 of the council of Agde). The acts of the first Toledan council (around 400; *c.* 6) mention *puellae Dei* living in private houses (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica IV, 330 f.). By contrast, *c.* 28 of the council of Agde refers to virgins leading cenobitic lives (*monasterium puellarum*; Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica IV, 132). The Mozarabic *Liber Ordinum*, which goes back to Visigothic sources, contains the *ordo* for a *benedictio de veste Deo vote* (ed. Férotin, 62–63), an *ordo ad benedicendum virginem* (ibid., 63–64), an *ordo vel benedictio ad velandas Deo votas* (ibid., 64–66) and an *ordo ad ordinandam abbatissam* (ibid., 66–68). The second of these could refer to a virgin who is not living in a monastery, but the third repeatedly mentions an abbess.

[31] The treatise *de institutione virginum* may have been written during the reign of Leovigild or Reccared; cf. Beltrán Torreira, "San Leandro de Sevilla y sus actitudes político-religiosas", *Actas del Primer Coloquio de Historia Antigua de Andalucia*, Córdoba 1993, II, 336. Férotin (*Liber Ordinum*, 62 note 1) gives the date "vers 584", Schilp (*Norm und Wirklichkeit religiöser Frauengemeinschaften im Frühmittelalter*, Göttingen 1998, 62 note 13) around 580.

[32] *Lectio te doceat quid orando petas* (*inst. virg.* 15; Campos Ruiz, 54). For the history of the concept of *lectio divina* in western monasticism see Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, Oxford ²1952, 28 f.

[33] *inst. virg.* 16 (Campos Ruiz, 55).

Christian education, especially in the literary disciplines of the *trivium*. The fact that Florentina was able to pursue these studies independently testifies to the high level of her culture. Jerome had extolled the capacity of Paula for grasping the spiritual sense of scripture, which he presented as a way to edify the soul.[34] Precisely this last association is taken up by Isidore in the dedicating letter addressed to his sister, for whose "edification" he claims to have written the treatise *de fide catholica*.[35] Leander advised his sister to dedicate herself in turns to reading and prayer;[36] Jerome told Paula to focus on both activities.[37] There were Spanish women who took great pains to understand the Bible; around 400, a female Spanish ascetic directed two letters to another woman, who may have belonged to an aristocratic family.[38] A source from the 7th century gives further evidence regarding biblical studies undertaken by women in Visigothic Spain.[39]

It is uncertain whether educated female aristocrats dedicated themselves to other intellectual pursuits besides theological studies.[40] Some of the outstanding manuscripts produced in the Frankish monastery of Chelles in Carolingian times may have been copied by women.[41] There

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[34] *ep.* 108, 26, 1 (CSEL 55, 344).

[35] In the *regula ad virgines* composed by Caesarius of Arles *aedificatio* is not an ideal of spiritual reading, it rather referes to the conversations of the nuns (*reg.* 19, 5; SC 345, 194).

[36] *inst. virg.* 15 (Campos Ruiz, 53). Isidore highlights the spiritual significance of reading as follows: … *cum vero legimus, Deus nobiscum loquitur* (*sent.* III, 8, 2; CCL 111, 229). He describes the life of monks with reference to prayer, reading and discussion (*eccl. off.* II, 16, 11; CCL 113, 77). For biblical studies of women in late antiquity, especially for their interest in spiritual exegesis, see Hinson, "Women Biblical Scholars in the Late Fourth Century: The Aventine Circle", *Studia Patristica* 33, Leuven 1997, 319–324.

[37] *Orationi lectio, lectioni succedat oratio* (*ep.* 107, 9, 3; CSEL 55, 300).

[38] Morin, "Pages inédites de deux Pseudo-Jérômes des environs de l'an 400, I: Deux lettres mystiques d'une ascète espagnole", *RBén* 40 (1928), 289–318. The addressee had acquired a high level of theological erudition. A source shedding some light on the practice of *lectio divina* by women in 6th-century Gaul, as well as on their spiritual understanding of scripture, is a letter written by a nun to another one (MGH, Epp. III, 716–718).

[39] A young woman who had entrusted herself to the spiritual guidance of Fructuosus of Braga is described as follows: *Haec nempe spiritalibus studiis diligenter indepta* (*vit. Fruct.* XV; ed. Díaz y Díaz, Braga 1974, 108, 16). This young aristocrat named Benedicta may have been instructed in the holy scriptures by her protector; however, the Life only says that she received *litteras* from him.

[40] McKitterick underlines the significance of female literacy outside the monastic context; see McKitterick, "Frauen und Schriftlichkeit im Frühmittelalter", *Weibliche Lebensgestaltung im frühen Mittelalter*, Cologne *et al.* 1991, 118.

[41] Chelles was originally a double monastery, but after the middle of the 8th century

are several letters by the Frankish queen Brunichild, who was a daugh-
ter of the Visigothic King Athanagild; however, she may have relied on
the services of a secretary.[42] So far there is no evidence for the existence
of a *scriptorium* in Florentina's circle; there is only an inconclusive paral-
lel between her personal situation and the social context of the Frankish
female monasteries that produced manuscripts in Carolingian times: all
of them were founded in the 7th century, and there were close ties to
families whose members included bishops of neighbouring dioceses.[43]
There is no evidence that one of the extant manuscripts of Isidore's *de
fide catholica* was written in or for a female monastery.[44] Among Isidore's
works that were copied by female communities in the eastern Frank-
ish and German kingdom between the 10th and 13th centuries there are
manuscripts of the *Etymologies*, the *synonyma* and *differentiae*, as well as
fragments of the *sententiae* and *de natura rerum*, but none of *de fide catholica*
or other exegetical works.[45]

Florentina was probably the abbess of her community.[46] Isidore re-
quests the superior of a female community to be sufficiently educated

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the sources refer exclusively to women. For the *scriptorium* of Chelles, which was active
between 785 and 810, see Bischoff, "Die Kölner Nonnenhandschriften und das Skripto-
rium von Chelles", *Mittelalterliche Studien I*, Stuttgart 1966, 22. For double monasteries on
the Iberian peninsula see Linage Conde, *Los orígenes del monacato benedictino en la península
Ibérica*, *I*, León 1973, 435–442; id., "La tardía supervivencia de los monasterios dobles
en la Península Ibérica", *Doppelklöster und andere Formen der Symbiose männlicher und weib-
licher Religiosen im Mittelalter*, Berlin 1992, 81–95 and Hilpisch, *Die Doppelklöster. Entstehung
und Organisation*, Münster 1928, 52–59. There is no indication that Florentina lived in or
presided over a double monastery.

[42] For Brunichild's correspondence with Gregory the Great see the latter's *registrum
epistolarum* (Index nominum: CCL 140 A, 1128). For femal authors Dronke, *Women
Writers of the Middle Ages. A critical study of texts from Perpetua (+ 203) to Marguerite Porete
(+ 1310)*, Cambridge 1984.

[43] McKitterick, "Frauen und Schriftlichkeit im Frühmittelalter", *Weibliche Lebensgestal-
tung im frühen Mittelalter*, Cologne *et al.* 1991, 71 f.

[44] The nuns of the monastery founded by Caesarius of Arles worked as *scriptores*:
… *libros divinos pulchre scriptitent virgines Christi* (*vit. Caes.* 58; MGH, SRM, III, 481). See
Heidebrecht/Nolte, "Leben im Kloster: Nonnen und Kanonissen. Geistliche Lebens-
formen im frühen Mittelalter", *Weiblichkeit in geschichtlicher Perspektive*, Frankfurt/M. 1988,
93. From early monasticism onwards religious texts were copied in female monasteries.

[45] El Kholi, *Bücher in Frauenkonventen des ostfränkisch-deutschen Reiches vom 10. bis zum 13.
Jahrhundert*, Bonn 1998, 159–162.

[46] Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique*, Paris 1959/
83, 7. Instead of the wording *proposito virgine* contained in Braulio's *renotatio* (… *postulante
Florentina germana sua proposito virgine*; Lynch/Galindo, 358) Fontaine prefers the phrase
praeposita virginibus (see his new edition in id., *Isidore de Séville. Genèse et originalité de la culture
hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*, Turnhout 2000, 432), which is partly inspired by the high
medieval *abbreviatio* (*postulante Florentina germana sua praeposita virginum*; Anspach, Taionis

in order to be able to instruct the sisters in doctrine;[47] Leander in turn hints at his sister's educational activities.[48] The *Liber Ordinum*, whose sources date back to Visigothic times,[49] requires an abbess to possess theological knowledge.[50] As a rule, monastic schools were run only by male communities;[51] however, the sources are few and far between.[52] Even in Carolingian times evidence for the education of female novices and for raising children in female communities is scarce.[53] Caesarius of Arles limited the educational activities of female communities to girls and women wanting to join the respective establishments.[54] Augustine

et Isidori nova fragmenta et opera, 59; see also ibid., 57: … *sanctissimae Florentinae virgini praepositae virginum*); Fontaine's reading doubtless makes better sense. It is possible that Florentina followed her mother as abbess in the community the latter had founded. The term *abbatissa* was not very common in Visigothic times; it is used by Fructuosus of Braga in chapter 17 of his *regula communis* (Campos Ruiz, 201f. 519. 543; for its doubtful authenticity *Clavis patrum latinorum* ³1995, 1870) and it appears various times in the *Liber Ordinum*, which may reflect the usage of later times. Heads of female communities are more often referred to as *mater* (*ordo ad ordinandam abbatissam*: Férotin 68, 1–3), *senior* (in Leander's "rule"), *ea quae praeest virginibus* (II Seville 619 *c.* 11) or *virgo virginum*; cf. Pérez de Urbel, *Los monjes españoles en la edad media*, Madrid 1933/34, II, 247 and Férotin, *Liber Ordinum*, 66 note 2.

[47] *eccl. off.* II, 16, 17 (CCL 113, 79), an almost verbatim quotation from Augustine's description of the monastic life of women, see *mor. eccl. cath.* I, 33, 70 (CSEL 90, 75). II Seville, *c.* 11 (formulated under Isidore's presidency) commissioned monks with the spiritual instruction of nuns (Vives, *Concilios visigóticos e hispano-romanos*, Barcelona/Madrid 1963, 170).

[48] *inst. virg.* 12 (Campos Ruiz, 50).

[49] However, the manuscript tradition only reaches back to the 10th/11th centuries. But there are parallels to Visigothic texts, compare the *ordo babtismi celebrando quolibet tempore* and the rituals described by Ildefonse of Toledo (*de cognitione baptismi*) and Isidore (*de ecclesiasticis officiis*); cf. Fisher, *Christian Initiation: Baptism in the Medieval West*, London 1965, 96–99. Pijuan even dates the baptismal rites of the *Liber Ordinum* to the times before Ildefonse; cf. Pijuan, *La liturgía bautismal en la España romano-visigoda*, Toledo 1981, 28.

[50] *Liber Ordinum*, *ordo ad ordinandam abbatissam* (ed. Férotin, *Liber Ordinum*, 69 note [1]): *in doctrina prefulgeat*. Pérez de Urbel (*Los monjes españoles en la edad media*, Madrid 1933/34, II, 247f.) points out that this passage is based on chapter 20 of the *regula monachorum* by Fructuosus of Braga (Campos Ruiz ch. 19, p. 157f.).

[51] Isid. *reg.* XXI (Campos Ruiz, 121f.). Some years after the establishment of cathedral schools by the 2nd council of Toledo in 531 the first monastic school on the Iberian peninsula was set up in San Martín in Asán (Aragón); see Fontaine, "Hispania II", *RAC* 15 (1991), 669.

[52] For monastic education see Linage Conde, *Los orígenes del monacato benedictino en la Península Ibérica, I*, León 1973, 427.

[53] McKitterick, "Frauen und Schriftlichkeit im Frühmittelalter", *Weibliche Lebensgestaltung im frühen Mittelalter*, Cologne *et al.* 1991, 112.

[54] *reg. virg.* 7, 3 (SC 345, 186) fixes the minimum age for joining the monastery at six or seven years, because at this age reading, writing and obedience could be taught. The

possibly refers to the education of orphans by consecrated virgins.[55]
Jerome drafted an educational programme for Paula in his letter to
her mother Laeta; he included instruction in holy scripture and the
writings of the fathers, but this was not meant to be a regular school
curriculum.[56] It was only with the *institutio sanctimonialium*, passed at
the synod of Aix-la-Chapelle in 816, that the establishment of schools
which were not explicitly limited to novices was made a norm in female
communities.[57]

    It is an entirely different matter whether female communities were
entrusted with the education of Jewish children who had been taken
away from their parents in order to be brought up as Christians. Evi-
dence referring to the transfer of Jewish children to monasteries dates
only from later decades.[58] Therefore it is pure speculation to main-
tain that the virgins in Florentina's community were entrusted with the
Christian raising of Jewish children.[59] We do not know at what age Jew-
ish children were later given into the care of monasteries; it is equally
unclear whether these children were in a position to conduct theologi-
cal arguments with recourse to biblical testimonies. It is highly improb-
able that works such as Isidore's *de fide catholica* could have served for
the education of minors, not even for the instruction of their teachers;
it is possible, however, that such texts were used generally for reference
purposes.[60]

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acceptance of girls who only want to get an education without intending to lead a *vita
religiosa* is expressly forbidden (*reg.* 7, 4; ibid.). Caesarius requests the nuns to learn to
read (*reg.* 18, 7; SC 345, 192: *omnes litteras discant*); every day two hours were set aside for
private reading (*reg.* 19, 1; ibid.).

[55] *ep.* 98, 6 (CSEL 34/2, 527f.).

[56] *ep.* 107, 4–9 (CSEL 55, 293–300).

[57] MGH, Conc. II, 1, 442.

[58] IV Toledo, *c.* 60 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 238).

[59] García Villada ("La cuestión judía durante la época visigoda", *Razón y Fe* 99,
1932, 152) advances the hypothesis that both male and female communities were
commissioned with educating Jewish children. Pérez de Urbel (*Isidor von Sevilla*, Cologne
1962 [Barcelona 1945], 109) speculates that "Gothic" and Jewish children "who would
be in danger in their families" were educated at the cathedral school in Seville. Cazier
is even sure ("sans doute") that Florentina was in charge of baptized Jews, both children
and adults, whom she was allegedly requested to educate and win over to Christianity;
cf. "De la coercition à la persuasion", *De l'antijudaïsme antique à l'antisémitisme contemporain*,
Lille 1979, 140 and id., *Isidore de Séville et la naissance de l'Espagne catholique*, Paris 1994, 53;
in this sense also Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue*, London 1934, 357.

[60] For the addressees of Isidore's treatise cf. *infra*, chapter 2.4. Cyprian highlights
the purpose of a mere collection of testimonies in the introduction to his work: …
excerptis capitulis et adnexis necessaria quaeque colligerem, quibus non tam tractasse quam tractantibus

There is one phrase in Isidore's dedicatory letter that requires further attention. He declares his intention to make his sister the co-heir of his labours.[61] His activities as a bishop were primarily directed at increasing the general level of culture and education and at propagating orthodox teaching. To this end he provided for a recension of the Vulgate prepared under his direction, he collected conciliar canons and composed all his works. The majority of these were handbooks meant to be used as manuals and reference books in monastic and cathedral schools, as well as by educated laypeople.[62] In addition, he took care to establish and enforce ecclesiastical law at different synods.[63] One has to ask the question in which aspect of these activities Isidore could have made his sister *cohaeres* of his labours. The phrase is in a similar syntactical position as the phrase *ut qua consorte perfruor sanguinis*. The author alludes to the bonds uniting himself and his sister, first those of nature, afterwards those of shared endeavours. Florentina's position as co-heir could be a passive one; she may be presented merely as a recipient of Isidore'e treatise; on the other hand she may also have been an active supporter and collaborator of her brother. However, there is no evidence supporting the latter theory.

In the *prooemium* to the second book of the treatise Isidore addresses his sister directly, but without giving any indication regarding her interest in the matter.[64] It is worthwhile taking into account Leander's plea, put forward in his treatise *de institutione virginum*, that his sister should

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materiam praebuisse videamur (CCL 3, 3). Adams speculates as regards Isidore's intentions ("Ideology and the Requirements of 'Citizenship' in Visigothic Spain: The Case of the *Judaei*", *Societas* 2, 1972, 329 note 39): "Isidore wrote it to his sister Florentina, presumably to provide her religious community with apologetic ammunition. The tone suggests that controversy was reasonably acute and threatening to the faith of some Catholics." However, the virgins of Florentina's community can hardly have taken part in (public) controversies. Moreover it is unclear in what way the faith of the sisters could have been put in jeopardy. In his excellent study on the evolution of medieval attitudes towards the Jews Cohen regrettably fails to substantiate his claim that Isidore "expressed particular concern for the baptism and Christian upbringing of Jewish children" (*Living Letters of the Law*, Berkeley *et al.* 1999, 97).

[61] *cohaeredem faciam et mei laboris*.

[62] Aherne, "Late Visigothic Bishops, their Schools and the Transmission of Culture", *Traditio* 22 (1966), 435–444.

[63] Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville. Genèse et originalité de la culture hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*, Turnhout 2000, 124.

[64] *In quo opere, sancta soror, poteris ex paucis animadvertere, quanta prophetarum voces in abiectione Iudaicae plebis et caeremoniarum cecinerunt, quantaque in laude populi Novi Testamenti intonuerunt* (*fid. cath.* II, *prooemium*; PL 83, 499).

remember him in her prayers; he expresses his hope that he will be
saved by virtue of her merits. Florentina and her three brothers dedi-
cated their lives to God's service; in this regard Isidore could easily
consider his sister to be co-heir of his work. In a narrower sense the
brothers and her sister were united in their efforts to read and under-
stand holy scripture. It is safe to assume that Isidore regarded his sister
as co-heir of God's kingdom and as an active participant in the uninter-
rupted divine office. In this respect, Leander's *de institutione virginum* links
up with Isidore's *de fide catholica*: the two brothers hoped for the spiritual
cooperation of their sister in their efforts to build up the church, which
may be one of the meanings of *aedificatio* in Isidore's dedicatory letter.
Leander admonished her to follow the example of Christ and Mary in
order to be an intercessor on his behalf before God;[65] Isidore provided
her with a christological and ecclesiological *summa* intended to serve the
instruction of herself and of her sisters, but possibly also of Visigothic
society at large.

Basically all lay people were to be equipped with the fundamentals of
biblical exegesis and hermeneutics, which formed part of the so-called
Isidorian programme to educate society.[66] *Cum grano salis* the treatise
de fide catholica can be interpreted as the "theoretical" counterpart to the
practical admonitions contained in Leander's *de institutione virginum*. Both
brothers give evidence of their sister's high cultural competence; both
treat topics of theological and religious importance. It is interesting
to observe that Isidore dedicated those of his works that were more
indebted to classical, "profane" knowledge to men who had not chosen
to lead a religious life. This distinction may be due to the respective
place of the addressees in society (monastic or worldly), but it cannot
be ruled out that Isidore regarded "profane" culture as unsuitable to be
studied by women.

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[65] Because of the repeated personal addresses on the part of Leander this treatise
may be his spiritual legacy to his sister; see Frank, *Frühes Mönchtum im Abendland, I*,
Zurich/Munich 1975, 445 note 44.

[66] For Isidore's "proyecto global de sociedad" see González Salinero, *Las conversiones
forzosas de los judíos en el reino visigodo*, Rome 2000, 17.

2.2. *Argument*

2.2.1. *Sources*

2.2.1.1. *The biblical text*

The foundation of Isidore's argument is provided by biblical proof-texts.[67] The connection between *fides* and *testimonium* dates back to pre-Christian Latin, when Cicero maintained that "faith" was to be brought about by testimonies.[68] The doctrine of the early church was corroborated by the testimonial of martyrs and holy scripture; trust-worthy proof concerning events that formed part of salvation history was adduced to provoke faith in readers and hearers.[69] In this re-spect, Isidore's treatise *de fide catholica* contains true evidence revealed by God that is meant to bring about or strengthen faith in the recipi-ents.

In his dedicatory letter Isidore announces that he is going to use prooftexts from the Old Testament so that the testimony of the proph-ets may corroborate the faith. This self-imposed limitation to evidence taken from the Old Testament is in accordance with the tradition of lit-erature *adversus Iudaeos*.[70] In the *Etymologies* Isidore declares that negation of the authority of the first part of the Bible is tantamount to heresy.[71] Two manuscripts of the treatise have the title *de fide catholica ex Veteri et Novo Testamento contra Iudaeos*;[72] this is doubtless a later interpolation.

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[67] *fid. cath.* I, 1, 2 (PL 83, 449 f.). For the normative position of the Bible see *syn.* II, 71 (PL 83, 861) and *etym.* VI, 2, 30.

[68] *Testimonium autem nunc dicimus omne quod ab aliqua re externa sumitur ad faciendam fidem. … ad fidem enim faciendam auctoritas quaeritur* (*top.* XIX, 73). The aspect of "trustworthi-ness" present in this passage can also be detected in Isidore; see *quaest. in Dtn.* 13, 2 (PL 83, 364). For his concept of *fides* see *infra*, chapter 2.3.1.

[69] Cf. John 19, 35.

[70] August. *adv. Iud.* I: *De sanctis ergo Scripturis, quarum et apud ipsos magna habetur auc-toritas, sumenda sunt testimonia, quorum et si nolint oblata utilitate sanari, aperta possint veri-tate convinci* (PL 42, 52) and Gregory the Great's following statement (*ep.* XIII, 13; CCL 140 A, 1014): *… ut eis ex eorum codicibus ostendentes quae dicimus.* The pseudo-Augustinian *altercatio Ecclesiae et Synagogae* says: *Ego te de tuo Testamento revincam* (CCL 69 A, 43). At the 10th council of Toledo (656) the canons dealing with the Jews were for-mulated with reference to passages taken from the Old Testament; cf. Juster, "The Legal Condition of the Jews under the Visigothic Kings", *Israel Law Review* 11 (1976), 272.

[71] *etym.* VIII, 5, 24. 31.

[72] Ziolkowski, 2 note 1.

In Isidore's view it is God himself who speaks through the scriptures,[73] which are divinely inspired.[74]

Christians differed from Jews on three points with regard to the Bible: on the scope of the canon, on the authoritative version of the text and on the exegetical methods deemed appropriate for biblical interpretation.[75] In order to understand which addressees Isidore had in mind when he wrote his text, it is essential to analyze his argument with regard to these three questions. A list of biblical books can be found three times in his entire œuvre, but the three passages differ from each other.[76] Isidore accepts the Jewish point of view insofar as he hardly ever uses the New Testament in his anti-Jewish treatise; on the other hand he does adduce prooftexts from deuterocanonical books that do not form part of the canon accepted by rabbinic Judaism.[77] Although it is doubtful that these books were regarded as normative by Jews living in Visigothic Spain, Isidore does rely on their testimony, probably because these quotations formed part of the collections of prooftexts he used during his work.[78] Moreover, the quotation from

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[73] All three divine persons speak through the Bible (*fid. cath.* I, 3, 2; I, 3, 9; I, 5, 4; I, 9, 1; PL 83, 454. 456. 461. 465).

[74] *etym.* VII, 3, 12. For the Holy Spirit as author of the Bible see *eccl. off.* I, 12, 13 (CCL 113, 15). For the inspiration of prophets see *fid. cath.* I, 10, 1 (PL 83, 468).

[75] Mayer, "Exegese II (Judentum)", *RAC* 6 (1966), 1194–1211; Gerber, "Exegese III (Neues Testament und Alte Kirche)", ibid. 1211–1229; Hoheisel/Pépin, "Hermeneutik", *RAC* 14 (1988), 722–771.

[76] *etym.* VI, 1; *pro praef.* 2–13 (PL 83, 155–160) and *eccl. off.* I, 11, 1–7 (CCL 113, 10). See Tapia Basulto, "El canon escriturístico en San Isidoro de Sevilla", *La Ciencia Tomista* 58 (1939), 364–388; this author is, however, mainly trying to prove that Isidore is a witness to the post-Tridentine Roman-Catholic canon.

[77] The Jewish canon was not fixed at any precise date. The so-called synod of Javne, which was said to have taken place at the end of the first century, is a historiographical myth created on the basis of Christian assumptions concerning the formation of rabbinic authority. It is safe to assume that the Jewish canon evolved gradually; rabbinic Judaism concentrated on those books that could be read in Hebrew or Aramaic; those that were only available in Greek or other languages were gradually deemed less authoritative. On the rabbinic canon see Davies, *Scribes and Schools: The Canonization of the Hebrew Scriptures*, Louisville 1998; Stemberger, "Jabne und der Kanon", *Jahrbuch für Biblische Theologie* 3 (1988), 163–174; Veltri, "Zur traditionsgeschichtlichen Entwicklung des Bewußtseins von einem Kanon: Die Yavneh-Frage", *JSJ* 21 (1990), 210–226; Peter Höffken, "Zum Kanonsbewußtsein des Josephus Flavius in *Contra Apionem* und in den *Antiquitates*", *JSJ* 32 (2001), 159–177.

[78] "Isidorus … omnes libros deuterocanonicos sine ulla distinctione a protocanonicis recipit atque in suis elenchis recenset." (Zarb, "Sancti Isidori cultus erga sacras litteras", *Miscellanea Isidoriana*, Rome 1936, 106). See also Carracedo Fraga, "Los apócrifos en la biblioteca de Isidoro de Sevilla. El testimonio del tratado *De ortu et obitu patrum*", *Euphrosyne* 22 (1994), 147–169.

the book of Baruch was traditionally regarded as conclusive proof for the Christian position.[79] But the fact that the canonical standing of the apocrypha was contested between Christians and Jews does not seem to have troubled him, because he could easily have dispensed with other quotations from these books, at least in those chapters where his argument could rely on passages regarded as canonical also by Jews.

It is certain that Isidore was aware of the differing scope of the canon.[80] He knew that the Jewish canon only comprises 22 books, in accordance with the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet.[81] However, when he tries to prove Christ's eternal generation by the father he supplements five quotations from protocanonical books by one passage taken from Jesus Sirach, even though this last one could easily have been omitted for the purposes of his argument.[82] The same can be said concerning chapter 51 of the first book, where a quotation from Jesus Sirach follows a passage from the psalms; since in other chapters he does not hesitate to occasionally base his argument on a single biblical prooftext only, he could have followed this procedure in all those cases where Jews might object to his adducing of deuterocanonical testimonies. We have to conclude that the author did not take care to adapt his argument to the horizon of any Jewish readers, if those were on his mind at all. This is also evident from his quotation from the Wisdom of Solomon,[83] even though in another work Isidore himself blames the Jews for allegedly removing this book from their canon because of the testimony he assumes it contains regarding the crucifixion of Christ.[84] He similarly quotes from additions to the book of Daniel that are not contained in the Hebrew Bible.[85]

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[79] Bar. 3, 36–38 (*fid. cath.* I, 17, 2; PL 83, 476). This is the only quotation from Baruch in all the works of Isidore. He may have regarded the book as part of the canonical book of Jeremiah. Also Gregory of Tours quotes from the apocryphal book of Baruch, even though he promises only to use those testimonies that have canonical authority in Jewish eyes (*hist.* VI, 5; MGH, SRM, I, 1, 269): *Ego vero non de evangeliis et apostolo, quae non credis, sed de tuis libris testimonia praebens, proprio te mucrune confodiam.* For the use of Baruch see Tert. *adv. Prax.* XVI, 3 (CCL 2, 1181) and Vogt, "Das Glaubensbekenntnis des Johannes Chrysostomus? Versuch einer 'Symbolstudie' mit einem Exkurs zu Baruch 3, 38 bei den Vätern", *ZAC* 3 (1999), 64–86.

[80] *etym.* VI, 1, 9; *pro. praef.* 8 (PL 83, 158).

[81] *etym.* I, 3, 4.

[82] Sir. 1, 6 (*fid. cath.* I, 2, 4; PL 83, 453).

[83] Sap. 2, 1. 12–13. 18. 19–20 (*fid. cath.* I, 23, 2; PL 83, 479).

[84] *eccl. off.* I, 12, 9 (CCL 113, 13).

[85] Dan. 3, 92 (*fid. cath.* I, 1, 5; PL 83, 451).

Since Isidore does not adapt his argument to the scope of the He-
brew canon, we have to address the question whether the biblical text
he uses and on which he bases his christological and ecclesiological
argument could have been regarded as convincing proof by Jews at all.
Jerome's translation of the Hebrew text, the Vulgate, started to circu-
late in western Europe from the 5th century onwards, gradually replac-
ing older Latin versions that were based on the Septuagint version;[86]
however, passages taken from the *Vetus Latina* were continually being
incorporated into the Vulgate, making periodic revisions of the text
necessary.[87] In his treatise *de natura rerum*, probably composed around
the same time as *de fide catholica*, Isidore adduces a large part of his quo-
tations from the Vulgate.[88] He is traditionally credited with providing a
new recension of the Vulgate which brought the text closer to Jerome's
original.[89] In the past, scholars often assumed that he was capable of
comparing the Latin text to its Greek and Hebrew counterparts, thus
arriving at a text close to the "original".[90] However, it is highly ques-
tionable whether Isidore possessed such a high level of linguistic com-
petence.

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[86] For possible Hebrew or Aramaic influence on the *Vetus Latina* cf. Ayuso Mara-
zuela, *La Vetus Latina Hispana, I: Prolegómenos*, Madrid 1953, 189.

[87] See ibid. 145–151. The *Vetus Latina* remained in use at least in rural areas of Galicia
until the end of the Visigothic kingdom; cf. Linage Conde, *Los orígenes del monacato
benedictino en la Península Ibérica, I*, León 1973, 265. See also Cantera Ortiz de Urbina,
"En torno a la *Vetus Latina Hispana*", *Sefarad* 15 (1955), 171–179; id., "Origen, familias y
fuentes de la *Vetus Latina*", *Sefarad* 22 (1962), 296–311 and id., "La *Vetus Latina* y el texto
masorético", *Sefarad* 23 (1963), 252–264. For the Vulgate see Brown Tkacz, "*Labor tam
utilis*. The Creation of the Vulgate", *VC* 50 (1996), 42–72.

[88] Out of 37 biblical passages 25 are based on the Vulgate, but only 17 are exact
quotations; see Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville: Traité de la Nature*, Bordeaux 1960, 13. In this
treatise the version of the biblical text is, however, of no importance for the character of
the argument.

[89] The high medieval *abbreviatio* of Ps.-Braulio says: *Bibliothecam compilavit* (Anspach,
Taionis et Isidori nova fragmenta et opera, 59), which may refer to the Bible, since
Isidore himself speaks of a *bibliotheca⟨m⟩ Veteris Testamenti* (*etym.* VI, 3, 2). See García
Villada, "La obra de S. Isidoro de Sevilla. Valoración y sugerencias", *Miscellanea Isido-
riana*, Rome 1936, 36 and Ayuso Marazuela, "Algunos problemas del texto bíblico de
Isidoro", *Isidoriana*, León 1961, 153–158.

[90] According to De Bruyne Isidore was "l'héritier le plus fidèle de la pensée de
Jérôme" ("Étude sur les origines de la Vulgate en Espagne", *RBén* 31, 1914/19, 374).
See also Ayuso Marazuela, "Algunos problemas del texto bíblico de Isidoro", *Isido-
riana*, León 1961, 171: "… apartándose lo más posible de influjos extraños, partic-
ularmente del Griego, y de la *Vetus Latina*, se vuelve por los fueros de la Verdad
Hebraica."

When he composed his works, knowledge of Greek in the west had already been waning for several centuries.[91] Yet some Greek inscriptions dating from as late as the 6th and 7th centuries were found on Iberian soil.[92] Knowledge of Greek did probably not increase as a result of the Byzantine presence in southern Spain, since the occupants most certainly spoke Latin.[93] It is remarkable that a Spanish bishop of Visigothic descent, John of Biclaro, knew Greek, but it is telling that he learnt it during his stay in Constantinople in the 6th century.[94] In addition, monks and bishops had been coming to Spain from the east for some centuries. Also in the 6th century, Martin of Braga, who originally came from Pannonia, translated 109 sentences of Egyptian fathers into Latin, commissioning his disciple Paschasius to translate a similar collection from Greek.[95]

With the exception of Jerome, none of the Latin church fathers knew Hebrew.[96] Jerome learnt some Hebrew in Bethlehem, but his exegesis was to a large extent influenced by Origen.[97] Tertullian certainly had personal contacts with Jews in Carthage, but there is no evidence that

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[91] Stroheker, "Das spanische Westgotenreich und Byzanz", *Bonner Jahrbücher* 163 (1963), 264.

[92] Vives, *Inscripciones cristianas de la España romana y visigoda*, Barcelona 1942, 418–427.

[93] Díaz y Díaz, "Introducción general", *San Isidoro de Sevilla: Etimologías*, Madrid 1982, 52 and Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique*, Paris 1959/83, 846.

[94] Isid. *vir. ill.* XXXI (Codoñer, 151).

[95] *Sententiae patrum Aegyptiorum* (ed. Barlow, New Haven 1950, 30–51); Paschasius Dumiensis, *Apophthegmata patrum* (ed. Geraldes Freire, Coimbra 1971, 2 volumes).

[96] For Jerome see Bardy, "Saint Jérôme et ses maîtres hébreux", *RBén* 46 (1934), 145–164; Opelt, "San Girolamo e i suoi maestri ebrei", *Augustinianum* 28 (1988), 327–338; Brown, *Vir Trilinguis. A Study in the Biblical Exegesis of Saint Jerome*, Kampen 1992 and now González Salinero, *Biblia y polémica antijudía en Jerónimo*, Madrid 2003. Jerome's linguistic competence should not be exaggerated; see Stemberger, "Hieronymus und die Juden seiner Zeit", *Begegnungen zwischen Christentum und Judentum in Antike und Mittelalter*, Göttingen 1993, 347–364. When he translated *iuxta hebraicam veritatem* he often relied on the help of Jews or Jewish Christians and also on the Greek versions of Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion which follow the Hebrew text quite closely; see Schulz-Flügel, "The Latin Old Testament Tradition", *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. The History of Its Interpretation I/1*, Göttingen 1996, 655. See also Kamesar, *Jerome, Greek Scholarship, and the Hebrew Bible. A Study of the "Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim"*, Oxford/New York 1993 and Hayward, *Saint Jerome's Hebrew Questions on Genesis*, Oxford 1995.

[97] The traditions he transmitted had some influence on medieval Latin exegesis; see Jerome's *Liber interpretationis hebraicorum nominum* (CCL 72, 57–161) and *Hebraicae quaestiones in libro Geneseos* (CCL 72, 1–56). For his influence on Isidore's historiographical writings see Cannone, "Storia ed esegesi biblica nell'*Historia Gothorum* di Isidoro di Siviglia", *Romanobarbarica* 8 (1984/85), 5–32, esp. 6–11.

he knew living Jewish tradition at first hand; at least such knowledge did not influence his writings.[98] Neither can such influence be detected in Augustine.[99] Since he regarded the Septuagint as divinely inspired and "canonized" by its use in the New Testament and in Christian tradition, he repeatedly argued against taking recourse to the Hebrew text. By contrast, the so-called Ambrosiaster, living at the end of the 4th century, shows some knowledge of living Jewish tradition, and he does not contest Jewish exegesis.[100] Latin authors derived their knowledge of Jewish exegesis mainly from Origen, often transmitted by Jerome,[101] but the vast majority of them was unable to consult Hebrew and rabbinic texts themselves.

Jews living in Visigothic Spain did not differ from their Christian neighbours with regard to the language they used in everyday life. Until late antiquity Jewish communities used Greek, and possibly also Latin, in synagogue services.[102] There are Greek inscriptions in the floor mosaics of Elche synagogue, dating from the 4th century.[103] The Tortosa stone from the 6th century is inscribed in Hebrew, Greek and Latin.[104]

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[98] Aziza (*Tertullien et le Judaïsme*, Nice 1977, 61) thought that Tertullian had first hand knowledge of Jewish traditions, but this position is questioned by Stemberger, "Exegetical Contacts between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire", *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. The History of Its Interpretation I/1*, Göttingen 1996, 585 note 66.

[99] Ibid. 585.

[100] See his *Quaestio* 44 (*adversus Iudaeos*; CSEL 50, 71–81) and Stemberger, "Exegetical Contacts between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire", *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. The History of Its Interpretation I/1*, Göttingen 1996, 586. The Ambroasiaster was probably not a converted Jew; see Speller, "Ambrosiaster and the Jews", *Studia Patristica* 17/1, Oxford *et al.* 1982, 72–78 and Merkt, "Wer war der Ambrosiaster? Zum Autor einer Quelle des Augustinus—Fragen auf eine neue Antwort", *Wissenschaft und Weisheit* 59 (1996), 19–33.

[101] For exegetical contacts between Christians and Jews see Poorthuis, "Who is to Blame: Adam or Eve? A Possible Jewish Source for Ambrose's *De paradiso* 12. 56", *VC* 50 (1996), 125–135; id., "Tradition and Religious Authority. On a Neglected Christian Parallel to *Mishna Abot* 1. 1–10", *HUCA* 66 (1995), 169–201; Baskin, "Rabbinic-Patristic Exegetical Contacts in Late Antiquity", *Approaches to Ancient Judaism* 5, Atlanta 1985, 53–80; ead., "Rabbinic-Patristic Exegetical Contacts", *Religious Studies Review* 24 (1998), 171–174 and Hirshman, *A Rivalry of Genius: Jewish and Christian Biblical Interpretation in Late Antiquity*, Albany 1996.

[102] Simon, *Verus Israel*, Paris 1948, 342–351. For the prevalence of Latin among Jews see Price, "The Jews and the Latin Language in the Roman Empire", *Jews and Gentiles in the Holy Land in the Days of the Second Temple, the Mishna and the Talmud*, Jerusalem 2003, 164–180.

[103] Frey, CIJ 662–664 and Vives, *Inscripciones cristianas de la España romana y visigoda*, Barcelona 1942, 431–433.

[104] Frey, CIJ 661 and Vives, *Inscripciones cristianas de la España romana y visigoda*, Barcelona 1942, 428. See the reproduction in Pérez de Urbel, "Las letras en la época

In 688 the Jew Paragorus from the *Narbonnensis* had a tombstone made for his three children, which shows a Hebrew inscription next to a Menorah;[105] this is, however, no evidence regarding the biblical text used by the local community. The same caution has to be applied when interpreting the fact that extant Jewish tombstones more often show Greek inscriptions than Hebrew ones. Three pieces of lead found in Mallorca, dated into the 4th or 5th century, are inscribed exclusively in Hebrew.[106] The use of the title *pater pateron* by Jews of Minorca at the beginning of the 5th century, who were, by the way, reciting psalms by heart in Latin, should not be interpreted as evidence for the use of Greek in the local synagogue services, since the use of titles often shows conservative tendencies out of step with everyday parlance.[107]

The biblical text deemed authoritative by late antique Jews probably differed depending on local tradition. Formerly, scholars tended to assume that they did no longer use the Septuagint, either because it was taken over and used by the Christians or because it was thought to have come into being at the order of a pagan ruler.[108] If this is true, Jews living in the 7th century would not by any means have accepted an argument based on the authority of the Septuagint, whose use had been gradually replaced by new translations provided by Symmachus, Aquila and Theodotion.[109] However, recent studies have shown that rabbinic Judaism did not reject the Septuagint out of hand, as sug-

visigoda", *Historia de España III: España visigoda*, Madrid 1940, 182 fig. 74. See also Gozálbes Cravioto, "Un ladrillo de época visigoda con simbología judía hallado en Ronda (Málaga)", *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos* 36 (1987), 89–94.

[105] Frey, CIJ 670.

[106] Bowers, "Jewish Communities in Spain in the Time of Paul the Apostle", *JThS* 26 (1975), 397.

[107] Against the interpretation of Bradbury; see *ep. Sev.* 6, 2 and 13, 2 (Bradbury, 84. 92). In Roman Christian liturgy Greek and Latin texts were used side by side until the second half of the 4th century, when the use of Greek was banned by Pope Damasus I; see Angenendt, *Geschichte der Religiosität im Mittelalter*, Darmstadt 1997, 369. However, Roman Christians mainly used the Latin text of the *Vetus Latina* even before that time. It is interesting to observe that some Jewish tombstones from Rome dating from the first Christian centuries bear inscriptions using Latin quotations from the psalms; see Kedar, "Latin Bible", *EJ* 4, 856.

[108] Tov, "Die griechischen Bibelübersetzungen", *ANRW* II, 20, 1, Berlin/New York 1987, 173. According to Hengel the Greek translations of the 2nd century owed their existence to anti-Christian tendencies; see Hengel/Deines, "Die Septuaginta als 'christliche Schriftensammlung', ihre Vorgeschichte und das Problem ihres Kanons", *Die Septuaginta zwischen Judentum und Christentum*, Tübingen 1994, 205. For a summary of earlier scholarship see Veltri, *Eine Tora für den König Talmai*, Tübingen 1994, 15–18.

[109] Simon, *Verus Israel*, Paris 1948, 348f.

gested by Christian sources.[110] While Justin Martyr claimed in the 2nd century that Jews rejected this translation,[111] several passages in the rabbinic corpus show a positive attitude by Jewish teachers regarding the time-honoured Greek translation of the Bible. According to Veltri, the main difference in evaluating various translations is due to a changing attitude to translations in general. The Septuagint was regarded as a "Torah for the King Talmai", being meant for the use of non-Jews, who were provided with a translation including suitable commentaries which could replace the Hebrew text for their purposes. By contrast, Aquila's translation was laid out as a *targum*, meant to be used by Jews side by side with the Hebrew text, which was commented on from a contemporary perspective, facilitating an understanding of the Hebrew original, which retained its authority.[112] Therefore the Jews could never agree to accord Aquila and the Septuagint the same authority.

Nonetheless, the use of the Septuagint was not forbidden in the eyes of late antique Jews; its status was not even undermined by its Christian reception. However, its standing could never equal that of the Hebrew text, which was always accorded the highest authority. This is the main point for the present analysis of the force of Isidore's argument. It was only in the 6th century that some Jewish sources testify to a gradual aversion from the use of the Septuagint.[113] This may be due to changes in schools and synagogue practice.[114] However, negative attitudes towards the Septuagint were not universal in the medieval period. In 553 the emperor Justinian allowed the Jews to use either the version of Aquila or the Septuagint in the synagogue.[115]

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[110] Veltri, *Eine Tora für den König Talmai*, Tübingen 1994, 213f. For the ongoing use of the Septuagint in rabbinic instruction—but not in the liturgy—see id., "Der griechische Targum Aquilas", *Die Septuaginta zwischen Judentum und Christentum*, Tübingen 1994, 110f. See also Vian, "Le versioni greche della Scrittura nella polemica tra giudei e cristiani", *Annali di storia dell'esegesi* 14 (1997), 39–54.

[111] *dial.* 68, 7; 71, 1 (Marcovich, 188. 193).

[112] For Aquila's translation as a *targum* and for the reception of rabbinic traditions by Aquila and Symmachus see Veltri, "Der griechische Targum Aquilas", *Die Septuaginta zwischen Judentum und Christentum*, Tübingen 1994, 92–115.

[113] Veltri, *Eine Tora für den König Talmai*, Tübingen 1994, 214–219.

[114] Veltri, "Der griechische Targum Aquilas", *Die Septuaginta zwischen Judentum und Christentum*, Tübingen 1994, 108–111.

[115] *nov. Iust.* 146, 1, 1 (Schoell, 714–718, at 715f.). Cf. Simon, *Verus Israel*, Paris 1948, 350; Juster, *Les juifs dans l'empire romain*, New York 1914, 369–377; Colorni, "L'uso del greco nella liturgia del giudaismo ellenistico e la novella 146 di Giustiniano", *Annali di storia del diritto* 8 (1964), 19–87; Avi-Yonah, *The Jews under Roman and Byzantine Rule*, Jerusalem 1984, 249f.; Schäfer, *Geschichte der Juden in der Antike*, Stuttgart/Neukirchen-

From the 6th century onwards the use of Hebrew increased among mediterranean Jews, as we can tell by the declining number of Greek inscriptions.[116] However, Hebrew had always held a primary position in the liturgy; translations of the biblical text were only read out so as to facilitate the understanding of the Hebrew version, which was read first.[117] In one of his sermons Augustine indicates that Hebrew (or Aramaic?) may have been actually spoken at that time in North Africa.[118] In addition, he reports that Jews were regarded as authorities in controversies over Jerome's Bible translation, which shows that North-African Jews did not depend on a Greek translation in order to understand the Bible.[119] The Jews of Arles are said to have sung in Hebrew at the funeral of bishop Hilary; whichever language that may have been, it should be noted that the author credits the Jews with knowing and using a "liturgical" language different from everyday and Latin parlance.[120] The same conclusion can be inferred from the statement made by Gregory of Tours that the Jews of Orléans greeted King Guntram in their language when he arrived in the city.[121] Around 800, Jews living in the Carolingian empire used the Hebrew Bible, and this is the reason why they were in a position to advise Christians on the Hebrew text.[122]

Vluyn 1983, 205 and Demandt, *Die Spätantike*, Munich 1989, 430 f. According to Veltri this order was motivated by Justinian's programme to convert the Jews to Christianity, but unintentionally it fostered the use of Hebrew among Jews, gradually replacing the Greek; see Veltri, "Die Novelle 146 *peri Hebraiōn*", *Die Septuaginta zwischen Judentum und Christentum*, Tübingen 1994, 116–130 and id., *Eine Tora für den König Talmai*, Tübingen 1994, 214 note 399.

[116] Veltri, "Die Novelle 146 *peri Hebraiōn*", *Die Septuaginta zwischen Judentum und Christentum*, Tübingen 1994, 124 f.

[117] For the primary position accorded to the Hebrew text both in Babylonian and in Palestinian Judaism see Veltri, "Die Novelle 146 *peri Hebraiōn*", *Die Septuaginta zwischen Judentum und Christentum*, Tübingen 1994, 125. On the other hand, Will/Orrieux *"Prosélytisme juif?" Histoire d'une erreur*, Paris 1992, 339 note 31 point out that it was only after the 9th century that the knowledge of Hebrew increased among western Jewry, when increasing numbers of Jews immigrated from Mesopotamia in the wake of the Arab expansion. Before that time European Jews would have used Greek or Latin Bibles, whereas synagogue services would have been conducted in the respective everyday language. However, this hypothesis is doubtful in the light of the evidence adduced below.

[118] Augustinus Hipponensis, Vingt-six sermons au peuple d'Afrique, ed. Dolbeau, 488 f.

[119] *ep.* 71, 4 (CSEL 34/2, 252): … *consulti Hebraei possunt aliud respondere.*

[120] *vit. Hilar.* 29 (SC 404, 156).

[121] *Et hinc lingua Syrorum, hinc Latinorum, hinc etiam ipsorum Iudaeorum in diversis laudibus variae concrepabat* (*hist.* VIII, 1; MGH, SRM, I, 1, 370).

[122] Albert, "Adversus Iudaeos in the Carolingian Empire", *Contra Iudaeos. Ancient and Medieval Polemics between Christians and Jews*, Tübingen 1996, 119–142.

In the light of this evidence it is impossible to tell with certainty
which biblical text was used and considered authoritative by Jews living
in the Visigothic kingdom in the 7th century. They may have been using
one of the Greek translations provided in late antiquity, a Latin version
based on these translations or the Hebrew text alone. We do not know
whether the Septuagint had already lost its standing, be it as a result
of changes in the attitude towards translations or in view of its "chris-
tianization". It is interesting to note that later in the 7th century Julian
of Toledo defended the use of the Septuagint against Jewish criticism
in his work *de comprobatione sextae aetatis*.[123] For an analysis of Isidore's
argument it is essential to recall that Christian authors had been using
the Septuagint since the 2nd century in their theological controversies
with Jews; there was a long tradition of "proving" Christian doctrine
with the help of passages taken from the Septuagint; Christian polemi-
cists even blamed the Jews for allegedly falsifying the biblical text.[124] If
an author wanted to convince Jewish readers or hearers of Christian
truth, he could therefore not expect the addressees of his argument to
accept proof from the Septuagint, which was considered as a transla-
tion made for gentiles, not being meant to replace the Hebrew text.
Christian authors such as Julian of Toledo knew very well that the Jews
did not accept the Septuagint text as binding and authoritative. Proof
that was to be convincing in Jewish eyes had to be based on the Hebrew
text or on a translation closely following it.[125]

The legend of Isidore's linguistic competence goes back to the high
medieval *abbreviatio* of Braulio's *renotatio*,[126] according to which he knew
not only Latin, but also Greek and Hebrew.[127] Isidore was probably

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[123] *sext. aet.* I, 23 (CCL 115, 170).

[124] Justin Martyr blames the Jews for removing many passages from the Septuagint;
see *dial.* 71, 2; 73, 6 (Marcovich, 193. 197).

[125] In the 14th century Nicholas of Lyra pointed out that the Hebrew text provided
the best suitable basis for an argument with Jews; see Blumenkranz, "Anti-Jewish
Polemics and Legislation in the Middle Ages: Literary Fiction or Reality?", *JJS* 15
(1964), 138.

[126] For the relationship of *abbrevatio* and *vita* see now Henriet, "*Rex, lex, plebs*. Les mira-
cles d'Isidore de Séville à Léon (XIe–XIIIe siècles)", *Mirakel im Mittelalter. Konzeptionen—
Erscheinungsformen—Deutungen*, Stuttgart 2002, 339f.

[127] Anspach, Taionis et Isidori nova fragmenta et opera, 57. For the uncritical recep-
tion of this statement in earlier scholarship see Tapia Basulto, "El canon escriturístico
en San Isidoro de Sevilla", *La Ciencia Tomista* 58 (1939), 382; Zarb, "Sancti Isidori cul-
tus erga sacras litteras", *Miscellanea Isidoriana*, Rome 1936, 109 and Castán Lacoma,
"Un opúsculo apologético de San Isidoro", *RET* 20 (1960), 329f. For a more nuanced
view see Brehaut, *An Encyclopedist of the Dark Ages. Isidore of Seville*, New York 1912, 35f.;

able to read Greek because he borrowed explanations of Greek words from works by other authors. It has been shown that he copied all the correct explanations contained in his *Etymologies* from earlier authors, but numerous phantastic and erroneous "explanations" leave no doubt that his competence was quite limited.[128] The fact that he does not rule out derivations of Greek words from Hebrew shows clearly that he did not master either of the two languages.[129]

Unlike Jerome, Isidore does not use the term *veritas hebraica*,[130] but nonetheless he preferred the Vulgate to all other translations, although not because of its Hebrew basis.[131] Nonetheless he repeated the legendary tradition of the divine origin of the Septuagint.[132] He also reproduced statements made by other authors regarding the holy character of the Hebrew language.[133] His endeavours to provide for a new recension of Jerome's translation contributed to its growing acceptance by and presence among western Christians; however, it is doubtful that he was able to collate various Latin versions with their Greek or Hebrew parallels, as had been demanded by Augustine.[134]

Madoz, *San Isidoro de Sevilla*, León 1960, 8f.; Domínguez del Val, "El helenismo de los escritores cristianos españoles en los siete primeros siglos", *CD* 181 (1968), 482; Hillgarth, "The Position of Isidorian Studies: A Critical Review of the Literature 1936–1975", *Studi Medievali* 24 (1983), 854 note 80 and Díaz y Díaz, "La cultura de la España visigótica del siglo VII", *Caratteri del secolo VII in occidente. Settimane di studio* 5 (1958), 841f.

[128] "Il n'a jamais eu du grec qu'une connaissance vague … il n'a jamais appris ni jamais su le grec." (Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique*, Paris 1959/83, 850).

[129] *Diapsalma quidam hebraeum verbum esse volunt quo significatur semper … Quidam vero Graecum verbum existimant, quo significatur intervallum psallendi* (*etym*. VI, 19, 14–15).

[130] Jerome's intention was to provide Christians with some knowledge regarding the wording and significance of the Hebrew text, which they might find useful when discussing theological problems with Jews; see Lubac, *Exégèse Médiévale*, Paris 1959/64, I/2, 241 note [13] and González Salinero, *Biblia y polémica antijudía en Jerónimo*, Madrid 2003.

[131] *etym*. VI, 4, 5; this is a transfer of Augustine's appreciation of the *Itala* (*Vetus Latina*; cf. *doctr. christ*. II, 15, 22; CCL 32, 47) to the Vulgate. See also *eccl. off*. I, 12, 8 (CCL 113, 13).

[132] *etym*. VI, 3–4. For the inspiration of the Septuagint see *eccl. off*. I, 12, 5 (CCL 113, 12). For similar views of Augustine see *civ. Dei* XV, 23; XVIII, 43. 45. 48 (CCL 48, 491. 639–641). For Jerome see González Salinero, *Biblia y polémica antijudía en Jerónimo*, Madrid 2003, 55–91. 213f.

[133] *etym*. VI, 19, 20: The two words *amen* and *halleluia* should not be translated into any other language *propter sanctiorem tamen auctoritatem*. He takes this from August. *doctr. christ*. II, 11, 16 (CCL 32, 42).

[134] *doctr. christ*. II, 11, 16 (CCL 32, 42). Isidore depends on this passage *etym*. IX, 1, 3. For Augustine's appreciation of the Hebrew Bible despite his general preference for the Septuagint see Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law*, Berkeley *et al*. 1999, 31.

Isidore did not unswervingly stick to the ideal of the *veritas hebraica*, because he thought that unclear passages could be elucidated by a collation of various versions and translations.[135] He reflects the earlier tradition according to which the holy character of the three languages derives from their use in the intitulation of Christ's cross.[136] This comes close to Augustine's position, according to whom it was unthinkable to identify the truth with one language only, since every language merely belongs to the realm of signs (*signa*) that are only indications of the proper thing (*res*).[137]

In his treatise *de fide catholica* Isidore does not follow the biblical text to the letter. Sometimes he quotes different versions of the same passage, and he does not hesitate to adapt the wording to the requirements of his argument.[138] Differences in formulation may also be due to his use of collections of testimonies that were compiled on the basis of texts using different versions of the Bible.[139] Other differences spring from his practice of quoting the biblical text by heart.[140] Therefore, each case of a different wording of biblical passages has to be analyzed on its own; variations in biblical quotations may be due to errors of memory, to the material used or to premeditated changes made to serve the argument. The latter are of particular importance for analyzing the force of the argument in the eyes of any possible Jewish addressees, as will be shown by the following examples.

In several cases his argument relies on Latin versions based on the Septuagint that have no parallel in the Hebrew text. When he tries to prove the existence of the Trinity he uses a version of Is. 42, 1 based on

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[135] *etym.* IX, 1, 3 (Reydellet, 33). The view according to which both the Greek and the Hebrew text had normative standing went back to Origen (in Jerome's translation: *in Jer. hom.* XI; PL 25, 664).

[136] *etym.* IX, 1, 3.

[137] For Augustine's language theory and his view on *res et signa* see Schulz-Flügel, "The Latin Old Testament Tradition", *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. The History of Its Interpretation I/1*, Göttingen 1996, 659f. For his position on versions of the biblical text see Fürst, "Augustins Haltung gegenüber Hieronymus' Bibelübersetzungen", *REA* 40 (1994), 105–126.

[138] See the notes of the editor PL 83, 454. 492. 493.

[139] *quaest. in Ex. praef.* 1 (PL 83, 287). For the use of excerpts and anthologies see Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique*, Paris 1959/83, 765. See also Isidore's preface to his *allegoriae*, where he uses the phrase *breviter deflorata* (PL 83, 97f.).

[140] In his *praefatio* to the first version of the *Etymologies*, addressed to King Sisebut, Isidore writes that he composed the work *ex veteris lectionis recordatione collectum* (ed. Lindsay, *ep.* VI).

the Greek text.[141] The version of the Vulgate, which follows the Hebrew, speaks of a "slave" (*servus*), whereas the Greek (*pais*) allows the translation of the passage meaning "son" (*filius*), without which a reference to the second person of the Trinity would be impossible.[142] However, it is striking that in another passage of the treatise he quotes the Vulgate translation of the same Hebrew word in a similar passage.[143] In this context his argument is not directed at proving the Trinity, but at Christ's abject condition during his earthly life, which can only be substantiated by adducing a passage describing him as *servus*; for this purpose the translation *filius*, preferred in the former passage, would be useless.

In order to prove that Christ is the key to understand the scriptures, Isidore adduces Hab. 2, 4: *Iustus enim ex fide mea vivet*.[144] The Vulgate version of this passage reads *Iustus autem **in** fide **sua** vivet*, which exactly translates the Hebrew text. Isidore's version again follows the Septuagint; only the Greek text allows an explicit reference to the faith of Christ, whereas the Hebrew and Vulgate versions could not be used to underpin the interpretation of Christ as the key to the scriptures.

Isidore's quotation of Ps. 95, 10 includes a characteristic Christian interpolation neither found in the Septuagint nor in the Vulgate or the Hebrew Bible: *Dominus regnavit **a ligno***.[145] This adverbial is only attested by the Coptic Bible, but it is used by several patristic authors with reference to the crucifixion of Christ.[146] While some of these authors blame the Jews for allegedly removing this passage from their Bible,[147] Isidore does not make such a charge. It is possible that he respected Jerome's authority, who had not included this addition in his translation. It is remarkable that in another work Isidore does not charge the Jews with deliberately falsifying the biblical text, while he does level this allegation against heretics.[148]

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[141] *fid. cath.* I, 4, 8 (PL 83, 459).

[142] For problems of terminology see Marc Kleijwegt, "Kind", *RAC* 20 (2004), 866f.

[143] Is. 52, 13: *Ecce intelliget servus meus* (*fid. cath.* I, 15, 1; PL 83, 473). The Latin *servus* translates Greek *pais* or Hebrew *'eved*.

[144] *fid. cath.* II, 22, 1 (PL 83, 529).

[145] *fid. cath.* I, 35, 3 (PL 83, 485).

[146] Just. Mart. *dial.* 73, 1 (Marcovich, 195); Tert. *adv. Iud.* 10, 11 (Tränkle, 28) and August. *enarr. in Ps.* 95, 11 (CCL 39, 1350). Cf. Brinktrine, "Dominus regnavit a ligno", *Biblische Zeitschrift* 10 (1966), 105–107 and Mehlmann, "Dominus regnavit a ligno (Ps. 95 [96], 10)", *Revista de Cultura Bíblica* 6 (1969), 69–98.

[147] E.g. Just. Mart. *dial.* 73, 1 (Marcovich, 195).

[148] *sent.* III, 12, 7 (CCL 111, 235); this may derive from Catholic criticism of Priscillianists.

Following patristic exegesis Isidore refers the creation narrative (Gen. 1, 1) to the Trinity, interpreting the phrase *in principio* as a reference to the Son as the word of God. As proof he adduces Ps. 39, 8–9: *In capite libri scriptum est de me*,[149] which he interprets as a hint to the beginning of the book of Genesis. As in the majority of cases he quotes the psalter in the Septuagint version; Jerome's translation, reflecting the Hebrew, reads *in volumine libri*, which would be of no use for the trinitarian point he wants to make.

Isidore's proof that Christ's death and resurrection were predicted in the Old Testament is based on a version of Ps. 67, 21 which significantly differs from other translations: *Deus noster, Deus salvos faciet nos, et Domini mors, et Domini exitus mortis*.[150] The Septuagint text is rendered in the *Psalterium Gallicanum* as follows: *Deus noster Deus salvos faciendi et Domini Domini exitus mortis*. None of these unclear passages provides a basis for assuming the death of God; on the contrary, it is apparent that the Lord is the way out of death, which is in accordance with the Hebrew text, rendered by the Vulgate as follows: *Domini Dei mortis egressus*. Nonetheless, Isidore's argument relies on a reference to the death of God.

Elsewhere he tries to prove that the exclamation ascribed to the Jews in Matthew's gospel ("Let his blood be on us and on our children": Mt. 27, 25) was predicted by prophets in the Old Testament. He quotes Is. 14, 20f.: *Semen pessimum, praeparate filios vestros occisioni in iniquitate patrum suorum*.[151] However, the Vulgate version, following the Hebrew, reads *filios **eius***. Isidore's text concords with the Septuagint (Is. 14, 21) in using the second person of the possessive pronoun, but in the singular. For his argument it is essential to use the second person, because the third (as in the Vulgate and in the Hebrew Bible) would make any reference to a self-condemnation of the Jews and their offspring impossible.

When discussing the two comings of Christ, Isidore quotes Is. 42, 13f.: *Dominus, sicut fortis, egredietur, et, sicut vir proeliator, suscitabit zelum, vociferabitur, et clamabit, et super inimicos suos confortabitur. Tacui semper, silui, patiens fui, sicut paries, loquar*.[152] This is mainly a faithful copy of the Vulgate version, but Isidore commits a grave mistake in reading *paries* ("wall") instead of *pariens* ("giving birth", which is an adequate translation of

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[149] *fid. cath.* I, 4, 4 (PL 83, 458).
[150] *fid. cath.* I, 44, 1 (PL 83, 488).
[151] *fid. cath.* I, 28, 1 (PL 83, 481).
[152] *fid. cath.* I, 61, 2 (PL 83, 497).

the Hebrew). Yet his subsequent argument is based on the erroneous reading.[153] There is no doubt that he did not consult the Hebrew or Greek version since he could not possibly have overlooked the difference. He exclusively depends on the Latin Vulgate, which he did not check against any version that could have been normative for Jewish contemporaries.

In order to prove that Christ was resurrected on the third day, Isidore quotes a passage from the prophet Hosea in the version of the Vulgate, which differs significantly from the Septuagint and the Hebrew Bible.[154] Such an argument can hardly have appeared convincing in Jewish eyes. The same can be said regarding his interpretation of the passage *Tu quoque in sanguine Testamenti tui emisisti vinctos de lacu, in quo non est aqua*.[155] He takes this to be a reference to blood and water flowing from Christ's body at the crucifixion. The typological parallels are barely visible, and moreover the presence of water is explicitly denied. The interpretation becomes totally impossible when collating the Hebrew text, which speaks of a female person sending away her prisoners. The Latin and Greek versions did not preserve the gender aspect, since these languages do not have the appropriate grammatical categories. However, such "proof" must have appeared ridiculous in Jewish eyes.

An uncritical reception of the Vulgate version can be detected also in Isidore's quote from Is. 1, 9, which he takes to be a reference to the incarnation of the Son of God and its significance for salvation history.[156] In this case the Vulgate follows the Septuagint (*sperma*); however, the Hebrew parallel ("rest" or "escapee") does not bear out his interpretation. At the end of the first chapter of the second book Isidore calls upon the Jews to emulate the converted "gentiles".[157] However, the biblical text in the wording of the three languages always uses a singular word for "foreigner" (*advena, ger, prosēlytos*: Dtn. 28, 43). Isidore changes the singular into plural ("peoples"), adding moreover the attribute "incredulous" to clarify the reason for this overturn of the hierarchy.[158]

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[153] *Loquetur ut paries, quia repente, quasi paries corruens, suos hostes est oppressurus.*

[154] Hos. 6, 3 (*fid. cath.* I, 54, 1; PL 83, 493).

[155] Sach. 9, 11 (*fid. cath.* I, 48, 1; PL 83, 490).

[156] *Nisi Dominus Sabbaoth reliquisset nobis semen, quasi Sodoma fuissemus* (*fid. cath.* I, 7, 2; PL 83, 464).

[157] *fid. cath.* II, 1, 15 (PL 83, 503).

[158] The same change was made by Cypr. *testim.* I, 21 (CCL 3, 22).

In quite a number of cases, the Greek and Hebrew version of the Bible do not justify Isidore's exegetical conclusions. He wants to refer a passage by the prophet Haggai to the Trinity.[159] The rendering *desideratus* can also be found in the Vulgate, which does, however, not imply the divinity of the desired person. In the Septuagint (Hag. 2, 7) there is a plural form instead of *desideratus*. In Hebrew there is a plural verb, which is, however, linked to a singular noun that should rather be in the plural.[160] The Latin equivalent would be *venient desiderati*, which could not be interpreted as a reference to Christ, the Messiah. It becomes clear that Isidore uncritically copied the Vulgate version without consulting the Greek or Hebrew text.

Isidore's proof that the Jews will finally acknowledge Christ as their king is based on an interpretation of Am. 4, 12f.: "Prepare to meet your God, O Israel. He who forms the mountains … the Lord God Almighty is his name" (*Praepara te in occursum Domini Dei tui, Israel, quia ecce ego … annuntians in hominibus Christum suum*).[161] The Vulgate equivalent, faithfully rendering the Hebrew, reads *Praeparare in occursum Dei tui Israel, quia ecce … adnuntians homini eloquium suum*. The last part of the Hebrew is not entirely clear; it might be rendered "and he will tell a man what his thinking shall be". The Septuagint version is based on a Hebrew text with a slightly different set of consonants; instead of *mh-shu*, as in the masoretic text, it must have read *mshu*, which was understood as a reference to the Messiah, translated as *christos* in Greek, which is reflected in Isidore's text. Because of the different wording of the Hebrew text a Jew would hardly have understood this as a request to prepare for the advent of Jesus Christ or to convert to Christianity.

A similar conclusion is inevitable when we look at another passage. Isidore refers a verse from Isaiah to Christ, who is said to convert the Jews.[162] However, in Hebrew all the forms of the verbs are female, which is faithfully rendered by Jerome in Latin with the help of relative pronouns. Isidore's masculine version is in accordance with some early manuscripts of the Vulgate, among them the *Codex Toletanus* from the 10th century, and with the Septuagint. Only this last version does not rule out a reference to Christ. Grammatically similar is Isidore's inter-

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[159] *Spiritus meus erit in medio vestri … Quia ecce ego commovebo caelum et terram, et veniet desideratus cunctis gentibus* (Hag. 2, 6. 7. 8: *fid. cath.* I, 4, 6; PL 83, 458).

[160] Gesenius, *Hebräisches und Aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament*, Berlin 17 1915, s.v. *ḥamdah*.

[161] *fid. cath.* II, 3, 7 (PL 83, 507).

[162] Is. 40, 9 (*fid. cath.* II, 3, 10; PL 83, 507).

pretation of Ez. 21, 26, which he refers to Christ's coming at the end of time to judge the world.[163] However, both the Vulgate (*nonne haec est quae …*), the Septuagint and the Hebrew Bible (Ez. 21, 31) have a grammatical subject in the female form, making this interpretation impossible.

In accordance with his stylistic ideal of brevity[164] Isidore points out that he had to leave out material for reasons of time and space; in the dedicatory letter he declares: … *ex innumerabilibus pauca proferenda putavi*. However, in several cases he seems to aim at a comprehensive collection of all relevant biblical prooftexts. In spite of that there are a number of biblical passages he quotes in other works but which he does not include in *de fide catholica*. Fontaine pointed out that like in the case of the *Etymologies* also in Isidore's theological writings sizeable "bilans d'absence" could be compiled.[165] When comparing Isidore's testimonies with the Christian tradition of collecting biblical prooftexts against the Jews, it becomes obvious that he does not take up all possible *loci probantes*. A striking example is Gen. 25, 23 ("the elder will serve the younger"), which was interpreted by many authors as a reference to the supposed inferiority and subservient position of Judaism.[166] Another passage Isidore fails to adduce in his anti-Jewish treatise is Gen. 48, 13–30 (the younger son Ephraim is preferred to his elder brother Manasse by their father when he is about to give them his blessing). Both texts were already used in the epistle of Pseudo-Barnabas (13, 1–7) written in the first half of the 2nd century.[167]

In order to illustrate the Jews' alleged blindness, Isidore repeatedly adduces Is. 6, 10, but he fails to mention other passages quoted by patristic authors in this connection, such as Zeph. 1, 17 or Lam. 4,

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[163] *Nonne hic est qui humiles sublevavit, et sublimes humiliavit?* (*fid. cath.* I, 61, 1; PL 83, 496f.).

[164] See the *praefatio* to his *prooemia* (PL 83, 160); *chron.* 2 (CCL 112, 6. 7); *etym.* VII, 1, 1; *ort. et obit. praef.* (Chaparro Gómez, 103); *quaest. in Gen. praef.* 2 (PL 83, 207); *quaest. in Gen. praef.* 3 (PL 83, 208); *quaest. in Ex. praef.* 3 (PL 83, 287). Braulio repeatedly stresses the stylistic ideal of his teacher in his *renotatio*: *sententiali brevitate subnotavit*; *brevitate quam potuit* (Lynch/Galindo, 356. 358; Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville. Genèse et originalité de la culture hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*, Turnhout 2000, 432).

[165] Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique*, Paris 1959/83, 773.

[166] August. *ep.* 196 (CSEL 57, 216–230, esp. 225ff.) and *enarr. in Ps.* 78, 10 (CCL 39, 1105). Tertullian adduces this verse as the very first direct biblical quotation in his treatise *adversus Iudaeos* (I, 4); he understands the alleged subservience of Jews only metaphorically, without any legal connotations.

[167] For an exegesis of Gen. 48, 13–20 by Isidore see *all.* 48 (PL 83, 107) and *quaest. in Gen.* 31, 4 (PL 83, 277). The chapter Gen. 25 is discussed *quaest. in Gen.* 23 (PL 83, 255–258).

14. Another striking omission are the three angels from Gen. 18 which
were interpreted by some, but not all, patristic exegetes as a reference
to the Trinity.[168] Isidore also leaves out Cant. 6, 12 (*revertere Sulamitis*),
which was often understood by Christian authors as a call upon the
synagogue to convert. It is also striking that he does not mention the
prophet Jonah as a type of Christ in the chapter on his resurrection. He
also fails to include the story about Elisha who pulls an axe from the
Jordan with the help of a piece of wood; this passage was interpreted
by Tertullian as a figure of the cross.[169]

   The preceding analysis showed that Isidore did not have sufficient
linguistic competence to be in a position to collate different versions of
the biblical text. In all probability he did not have any knowledge of
Hebrew.[170] Whenever he refers to the Hebrew text or explains Hebrew
names he derives his knowledge from earlier authors, mainly Jerome.
In a great number of cases his interpretations and conclusions are not
supported by the Hebrew Bible and versions of the biblical text based
on it; therefore his argument cannot have appeared convincing to Jews.

2.2.1.2. *Church fathers*

Isidore's argument is mainly based on biblical prooftexts; ecclesiastical
authorities are relegated to a secondary position.[171] In all his works
he relied heavily on earlier tradition,[172] very often not derived from
the primary sources but taken over from works composed by other
authors.[173] For exegesis he often based his argument on Augustine,[174]

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[168] Thunberg, "Early Christian Interpretations of the Three Angels in Gen. 18", *Studia Patristica* 7/1, Berlin 1966, 560–570. However, Isidore does quote this passage *lib. num.*
4, 15 (PL 83, 182). This work is taken as an authentic work of Isidore's by the majority
of scholars; doubts are expressed by Bischoff, "Eine verschollene Einteilung der Wissenschaften", *Archives d'histoire doctrinaire et littéraire du moyen-âge* 25 (1958), 9f. and Díaz y
Díaz, "Isidoro en la Edad Media hispana", *De Isidoro al siglo XI*, Barcelona 1976, 145.

[169] 2 Kings 6, 4ff.; cf. Tert. *adv. Iud.* 13, 17–19 (Tränkle, 35f.).

[170] This conclusion can also be drawn from an analysis of other works. Only ignorance of Hebrew can have induced him to confuse Bethlehem and Bethel; cf. *quaest. in
Gen.* 24, 1–2 (PL 83, 258).

[171] *fid. cath.* II, 15, 2 (PL 83, 522).

[172] Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law*, Berkeley *et al.* 1999, 97; Uitvlugt, "The Sources of
Isidore's Commentaries on the Pentateuch", *RBén* 112 (2002), 72–100.

[173] See *quaest. in Gen. praef.* 5 (PL 83, 209) and also his preface to his treatise *de natura
rerum* (*praef.* 1. 2; Fontaine, 167, 4f. 11ff.). "The sources on which he relied were for the
most part relatively recent." (Laistner, *Thought and Letters in Western Europe. A.D. 500 to
900*, London 1931, 124).

[174] Châtillon, "Isidore et Origène: recherches sur les sources et l'influence des *Quaestiones in Vetus Testamentum* d'Isidore de Séville", *Mélanges André Robert*, Paris 1957, 540.

but also on Gregory the Great.[175] He also used the more learned
exegesis of Origen and Jerome, often simplifying it for the purposes
of his argument.[176] He names Origen first among the patristic authors
he mentions in the preface to the *quaestiones*.[177] When using exegetical
works written by Greek authors, Isidore depended on translations.[178]
The conclusions drawn from his use of biblical sources also apply to
his work with Greek authors: he was unable to apply critical judgement
to translations and their relationship to the original. Nor did he pay
attention to the historical development of the exegesis of particular
passages, putting different interpretations side by side.[179]

   With regard to canon law, Isidore is in accordance with Spanish and
North-African tradition in only recognizing the authority of the first
four ecumenical councils;[180] the 2nd council of Constantinople, which
took place in 553, was never accepted by the Visigothic church because

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[175] He used his *moralia in Job*, the *regula pastoralis* and the *homiliae in Ezechielem*; the
dialogues traditionally attributed to Gregory only started to circulate on the Iberian
peninsula after Isidore's death. For his adaptation of Augustine's and Gregory's work
see Reydellet, *La Royauté dans la littérature latine de Sidoine Apollinaire à Isidore de Séville*,
Rome 1981, 574–584. For the influence of Ambrose see Gorman, "From Isidore to
Claudius of Turin: The Works of Ambrose on Genesis in the Early Middle Ages", *REA*
45 (1999), 121–138. See also Meyvaert, "Uncovering a Lost Work of Gregory the Great:
Fragments of the Early Commentary on Job", *Traditio* 50 (1995), 55–74.

[176] Châtillon, "Isidore et Origène", *Mélanges André Robert*, Paris 1957, 540. For the
interpretation of the book of Joshua Origen was almost his only source; see Lubac,
Exégèse Médiévale, Paris 1959/64, I, 238. Isidore was one of the most important transmit-
ters of Origen's exegesis to the Middle Ages; see Châtillon 542 and Fontaine, *Isidore de
Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique*, Paris 1959/83, 757 note 1. Whenever
he finds discrepancies between information provided by Jerome and other authors rele-
vant to his argument in *de ortu et obitu patrum*, he always follows the former; cf. Chaparro
Gómez, *Isidoro de Sevilla. De ortu et obitu patrum*, 176 note 117.

[177] *quaest. in Gen. praef.* 5 (PL 83, 209). See also Châtillon, "Isidore et Origène",
Mélanges André Robert, Paris 1957, 536–547.

[178] In his chapter on John Chrysostom (*vir. ill.* VI; Codoñer, 137 f.) Isidore highlights
those works that were available in Latin: *Condidit … graeco eloquio multa et praeclara
opuscula. E quibus utitur latinitas …* Also the following statement is revealing: *Est etiam
et alius liber eiusdem apud Latinos.* He says explicitly that several of Chrysostom's works
had been translated into Latin; there is no indication that he read Greek works in
the original. No contemporary author ever mentioned any activities of Isidore as a
translator. Quotations from the works of Greek authors contained in the canons of the
2nd council of Seville, which met under Isidore's presidency, were taken from a Latin
translation; see Madoz, "El florilegio patrístico del concilio II de Sevilla", *Miscellanea
Isidoriana*, Rome 1936, 196.

[179] Fontaine, "Grammaire sacrée et grammaire profane: Isidore de Séville devant
l'exégèse biblique", *Los Visigodos. Historia y Civilización*, Murcia 1986, 325 note 36.

[180] *etym.* VI, 16, 10.

its attitude in the controversy of the three chapters was regarded as doubtful, if not heretical.[181] After the Acacian schism at the end of the 5th century western churches considered the decisions taken at the council of Chalcedon as a definitive settlement of the disputes over orthodoxy; therefore they were always anxious to defend this 4th ecumenical council against putative attempts to undermine its decisions.[182]

Nowhere does the argument in *de fide catholica* explicitly refer to conciliar decisions, although the christological chapters of the first book are in fact an exposition of the christological doctrine of the first ecumenical councils. It was Isidore's intention to prove that Catholic teaching was in accordance with the Bible, more especially with the Old Testament; he did not want to show that the doctrine of the church was in fact a result of the development of theology during the first Christian centuries. Therefore his argument is on the one hand implicitly based on conciliar canons and church dogma, but on the other hand he pretends to argue *sola scriptura*.

Probably for this reason Isidore never explicitly refers to the most important Latin authors who had written works *adversus Iudaeos*, namely Tertullian, Cyprian and Augustine.[183] The only authority whose name is mentioned in *de fide catholica* is Hilary of Poitiers.[184] A detailed comparison of the series of biblical quotations adduced by Isidore with possible parallels in the works of the three authors just mentioned shows that he never copies coherent chains of prooftexts that exceed a certain length. When he does quote passages adduced by earlier authors, he adapts

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[181] Stroheker, "Das spanische Westgotenreich und Byzanz", *Bonner Jahrbücher* 163 (1963), 258; Barbero de Aguilera, "El conflicto de los Tres Capítulos y las iglesias hispánicas en los siglos VI y VII", *Studia Historica* (Historia Medieval) 5 (1987), 123–144; see also Linehan, *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain*, Oxford 1993, 62.

[182] Angenendt, *Das Frühmittelalter*, Stuttgart *et al.* ²1995, 141. For the central importance of Chalcedon for the Visigothic church see Madoz, "El concilio de Calcedonia en San Isidoro de Sevilla", *RET* 12 (1952), 189–204. For the reception of the decisions of Chalcedon in Spain see Wyrwa, "Drei Etappen der Rezeptionsgeschichte des Konzils von Chalkedon im Westen", *Chalkedon: Geschichte und Aktualität*, Leuven 1997, 150.

[183] His reluctance to quote Tertullian may have been motivated by the fact that the latter joined the heretical Montanists at the end of his life; Isidore refers to Tertullian's heresy *etym.* VIII, 5, 60. However, he does explicitly adduce testimony by Cyprian: … *ut sanctissimus Cyprianus ait* (*eccl. off.* I, 18, 4; CCL 113, 20).

[184] *fid. cath.* I, 19, 2 (PL 83, 478). However, this passage has not been found in Hilary's extant writings. Another quote from this author, adduced in the canons of the 2nd council of Seville, has not been identified either; see Madoz, "Le symbole du IVe concile de Tolède", *RHE* 34 (1938), 16.

these testimonies to his own purposes.[185] Most probably he used existing collections of prooftexts, but these were not the extant works of his predecessors; he derived his sources mainly from anthologies that are lost today, which may have been compiled for educational purposes.[186] Part of the work of collecting the sources, possibly even part of the redactory work, was done by members of his *scriptorium*.[187] Isidore's own contribution should be looked for mainly in the structural outline of the treatise, partly also in the disposition of the sources.[188] His works should not be disqualified as mere *centones* of patristic texts;[189] he rather adapted and changed his sources to serve his own ends.[190]

A comparison of Isidore's treatise with the works written by Tertullian and Cyprian *adversus Iudaeos* shows some parallels, but there are always differences that indicate his own contribution. When discussing the typological relationship between Christ and Joshua, Isidore partly copies a passage from Tertullian, but providing several biblical prooftexts, something Tertullian failed to do.[191] There are some examples for

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[185] Díaz y Díaz describes a similar procedure in his analysis of the *Etymologies*: "Introducción general", *San Isidore de Sevilla: Etimologías* (Madrid 1982), 183.

[186] For the importance of intermediary collections see Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique*, Paris 1959/83, 18. As a rule Isidore did not indicate his indirect sources; see ibid., 739 note 1. He may even have received his knowledge of works by Gregory the Great, who was nearly his contemporary, through the latter's secretary, Paterius; see O'Loughlin, "Isidore's Use of Gregory the Great in the Exegesis of Genesis", *RBén* 107 (1997), 263–269.

[187] Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique*, Paris 1959/83, 767 note [2].

[188] For the limited usefulness and applicability of the concept of "originality" see O'Loughlin, "Individual Anonymity and Collective Identity. The Enigma of Early Medieval Latin Theologians", *RTPM* 64 (1997), 305. For the relativity of this concept see also Stern, "The Concept of Authorship in the Babylonian Talmud", *JJS* 46 (1995), 185: "No individual author, indeed, no matter how autonomous or original, is ever *fully* responsible for his own work: he is conditioned to a large extent by his cultural environment and the cultural tradition that preceded him. Collective tradition is in fact no less important, in 'objective' terms, than individual authorship." For the adaptation of Augustinian texts by Isidore see Carpin, *Il battesimo in Isidoro di Siviglia*, Bologna 1984, 40–44 and 184–187, who stresses the "capacità di Isidoro di adattare un testo non suo alla logica del suo discorso" (ibid., 44).

[189] Against Diesner, "Zeitgeschichte und Gegenwartsbezug bei Isidor von Sevilla", *Philologus* 119 (1974), 92; Bareille, "Isidore de Séville", *DThC* 8 (1924), 101 ("Il fut surtout un compilateur") and 107 ("Il s'est contenté d'être l'écho de la tradition"); Lubac, *Exégèse Médiévale*, Paris 1959/64, I, 111 (concerning the *sententiae*).

[190] Madoz, "El florilegio patrístico del concilio II de Sevilla", *Miscellanea Isidoriana*, Rome 1936, 217 ff.; id., *San Isidoro de Sevilla*, León 1960, 135 and Borst, "Das Bild der Geschichte in der Enzyklopädie Isidors von Sevilla", *DA* 22 (1966), 8 and 57.

[191] Compare *adv. Iud.* 9, 22 (Tränkle, 24) and *fid. cath.* I, 6, 1–2 (PL 83, 463).

this procedure: Isidore employs part of Tertullian's text, adding additional biblical prooftexts as well as passages he formulated independently.[192]

The following table shows an example where Isidore adduces some of his biblical prooftexts in the same order as Tertullian; the latter's commentary is also partly reproduced. Isidore even follows Tertullian's version of the Latin Bible where it differs from the Vulgate.[193]

Tert. *adv. Iud.* 4, 1–3 (Tränkle, 9)	*fid. cath.* II, 15, 7 (PL 83, 523f.)
Mementote diem sabbatorum, sanctificare eum (**Ex. 20, 8**); *omne opus servile non facietis in eo* (**Ex. 20, 10**) … *Dicit enim Esaias propheta: Sabbata vestra odit anima mea* (following **Is. 1, 13f.**). *Et alio loco dicit: Sabbata mea profanastis* (**Ez. 22, 8**). *Unde dinoscimus sabbatum temporale esse humanum et sabbatum aeternum censeri divinum, de quo per Esaiam praedicat: Et erit, inquit, mensis ex mense et dies de die et sabbatum de sabbato, et veniet omnis caro adorare in Hierusalem, dicit Dominus* (**Is. 66, 23**).	*Memento ut diem Sabbati sanctifices … non facies in eo omne opus* (**Ex. 20, 8ff.**) … *Nam ista temporalia Sabbata odit Deus, dum dicit: Neomenias et Sabbata vestra odivit anima mea* (following **Is. 1, 13f.**) … *Nam de illis dixit: Sabbata mea profanastis* (**Ez. 22, 8**). *Unde dignoscitur Sabbatum temporale humanum esse, Sabbatum autem divinum illud aeternum esse, de quo per Isaiam dicitur: Et erit, inquit, mensis ex mense, et dies ex die, et Sabbatum ex Sabbato, et veniet omnis caro adorare in Ierusalem, dicit Dominus* (**Is. 66, 23**).

There are also parallels to Cyprian's collection of testimonies. Cyprian hardly ever gives explanations and commentaries; therefore parallels can only be detected in the formulation and combination of prooftexts. Both authors characteristically merge the verses Sach. 9, 9 and Is. 62, 11.[194] Isidore takes his text either directly from Cyprian, or else both rely on an old Latin translation of the Bible differing from the Vulgate and from the Septuagint.

A combination of the same biblical prooftexts by both authors can also be found in the following passage discussing the impossibility of scriptural understanding without prior faith.

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[192] Compare *adv. Iud.* 9, 12 (Tränkle, 22) and *fid. cath.* I, 13, 2 (PL 83, 472); *adv. Iud.* 10, 6 (Tränkle, 27) and *fid. cath.* I, 34, 2 (PL 83, 484).

[193] Jerome translates Ez. 22, 8 *polluistis* instead of *profanastis*. According to the Vulgate Is. 66, 23 reads: *Et erit mensis ex mense et sabbatum ex sabbato; veniet omnis caro ut adoret coram facie mea, dicit Dominus*. The adverbial *in Ierusalem* found in Tertullian and Isidore is attested by the Septuagint.

[194] Compare *testim.* II, 29 (CCL 3, 68) and *fid. cath.* I, 15, 1 (PL 83, 473).

Cypr. *testim.* I, 5 (CCL 3, 10f.)

Apud Esaiam: Et si non credideritis, neque intellegetis (**Is. 7, 9**). *Vnde Dominus in evangelio: Si enim non credideritis, quia ego sum, moriemini in peccatis vestris* (**John 8, 24**). *Fide autem stare iustitiam et illic esse vitam praedictum est apud Ambacum: Iustus autem ex fide mea vivit* (**Hab. 2, 4**). *Inde Abraham pater gentium credidit. In Genesi: Et credidit Abraham Deo, et deputatum est ei ad iustitiam* (**Gen. 15, 6**). At the end he adduces a long passage from the New Testament (**Gal. 3, 6–9**).

fid. cath. II, 22, 1 (PL 83, 529f.)

Neque enim possunt legem et prophetas intelligere, nisi ante in Christum crediderint, loquente Isaia: Si non credideritis, non intelligetis (**Is. 7, 9**). *Iustus enim ex fide mea vivet* (**Hab. 2, 4**) *ait Dominus per prophetam. Unde et Abraham pater gentium factus est, quia credidit Deo, et reputatum est ei ad iustitiam* (**Gen. 15, 6**).

The sequence of prooftexts from the Old Testament is identical in both authors. It is significant that Isidore omits the two passages from the New Testament, which is in line with his intention to prove the truth of Christian doctrine entirely on the basis of the Old Testament.[195] The version of the verse taken from Isaiah is nearly identical, although it differs from the Vulgate and the other recensions of the Bible.[196]

In the chapter on the crucifixion Isidore adduces a chain of testimonies also found in Cyprian and in the pseudo-Augustinian *altercatio Ecclesiae et Synagogae*. Also in this case there are omissions; as could have been expected, Isidore again leaves out a passage from the New Testament.

Isid. *fid. cath.* I, 35 (PL 83, 484f.)	Ps.-Aug. *alterc.* (CCL 69 A, 36)	Cypr. *testim.* II, 20 (CCL 3, 57–59)
	Is. 65, 2	Is. 65, 2
Jer. 11, 19: … *mittamus lignum in panem eius, et eradamus eum de terra viventium.*	**Jer. 11, 19**: *Venite, mittamus lignum in pane eius.*	**Jer. 11, 19**: *Venite, mittamus lignum in panem eius et eradamus a terra vitam eius.*

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[195] A similar omission of a New Testament passage from an otherwise identical chain of prooftexts can be detected by comparing *testim.* II, 23 (CCL 3, 61) and *fid. cath.* I, 45 (PL 83, 489).

[196] The Vulgate reads: *Si non credideritis, non permanebitis*, the last word adequately rendering the Hebrew. The Septuagint translates "you will be together". The version *intellegetis* found in Cyprian and Isidore is only attested by the *Vetus Latina*. The same

Isid. *fid. cath.* I, 35 (PL 83, 484 f.)	Ps.-Aug. *alterc.* (CCL 69 A, 36)	Cypr. *testim.* II, 20 (CCL 3, 57–59)
Dtn. 28, 66: *Et erit vita tua pendens ante oculos tuos, et timebis die ac nocte, et non credes vitae tuae.*	**Dtn. 28, 66**: *Et erit, inquit, pendens vita tua ante oculos tuos die ac nocte.*	**Dtn. 28, 66**: *Et erit pendens vita tua ante oculos tuos, et timebis die et nocte et non credes vitae tuae.*
Ps. 140, 2: *Elevatio manuum mearum sacrificium vespertinum.*	**Ps. 87, 10**	Ps. 21, 17–23
Is. 9, 6	**Num. 23, 19**	Ps. 118, 120
Ps. 95, 10: *Dominus regnavit a ligno.*	**Ps. 95, 10**: *Dominus regnavit a ligno.*	**Ps. 140, 2**: *Allevatio manuum mearum sacrificium vespertinum.*
Hab. 3, 4		Zeph. 1, 7
Hab. 3, 19		Sach. 12, 10
		Ps. 87, 10
		Num. 23, 19
		John 3, 14. 15

The logical link between the different passages in Isidore's argument is not always clear, even though he did not hesitate to change the wording of biblical prooftexts or passages copied from earlier authors.[197] Precisely because he heavily relied on earlier tradition and on the help of his *scriptorium* he was unable to subordinate every single prooftext to the underlying thread of the argument. It is possible to speculate that this was not his intention in the first place; possibly the addressees he had in mind did not expect such a coherent exposition either.

2.2.2. *Method*

As indicated above, Isidore tries to prove the truth of Catholic doctrine on the basis of biblical testimonies only. He wants to create the impres-

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word is found in the Septuagint at Is. 6, 9, and it is again rendered as *intellegetis* or *intelligetis* by Cyprian (*testim.* I, 3; CCL 3, 8) and Isidore (*fid. cath.* I, 18, 3 and II, 21, 1; PL 83, 477. 529).

[197] Domínguez del Val, "La utilización de los padres por San Isidoro", *Isidoriana*, León 1961, 211–221.

sion that his argument is based entirely on the Bible; church doctrine is supposed to derive directly from it. However, in fact he starts from the suppositions of christological dogma, which he tries to underpin with the help of biblical prooftexts.[198] It is worth noticing some parallels to the method advocated by the fathers of the 2nd council of Seville, meeting under Isidore's presidency in 619.[199] It is striking that the Sevillian fathers expressly exclude *argumenta*, reserving the authority of compelling proof to the Bible.

Isidore's exegesis is based on the assumption that Old Testament prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus Christ, and that Old Testament types point to the gospel and to the teaching of the church.[200] The four hermeneutic approaches derived from traditional methods of grammar were analogy, etymology, *glossa* and *differentia*.[201] In accordance with the principles of contemporary exegesis and in line with the majority of pre-scholastic theology the appeal to human reason does not form part of his arsenal.[202] The terminology he uses to describe the relationship

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[198] *fid. cath.* I, 62, 1 (PL 83, 498); see also *fid. cath.* I, 4, 2 (PL 83, 457).

[199] *Cuius geminae naturae distinctio primum ex litteris legis, deinde ex prophetis, et evangelicis atque apostolicis depromenda est paginis, ut ea quae asserimus non argumentis sed exemplis Scripturarum firmemus* (*c.* 13; Vives, *Concilios visigóticos e hispano-romanos*, Barcelona/Madrid 1963, 172). The main difference is that in his treatise against the Jews Isidore almost completely dispenses with testimonies taken from the New Testament.

[200] For a summary of his hermeneutic principles see *quaest. in Iud.* 9, 7 (PL 83, 392). See also Studer, "Die patristische Exegese, eine Aktualisierung der Heiligen Schrift", *REA* 42 (1996), 71–95.

[201] For Isidore's view on grammar see Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique*, Paris 1959/83, 38–48. See also Dörrie, "Spätantike Symbolik und Allegorese", *FMSt* 3 (1969), 1–12 and Magallón García, *La tradición gramatical de "differentia" y "etymologia" hasta Isidoro de Sevilla*, Zaragoza 1996. Isidore defines the etymological method as follows: … *quousque ad proprium eius de quo quaerimus signata eius expressione perveniamus* (*etym.* II, 25, 2; Marshall, 113, who points to a parallel in Marius Victorinus, who in turn relies on Cicero). See also *etym.* I, 29, 1: *Etymologia est origo vocabulorum, cum vis verbi vel nominis per interpretationem colligitur*; cf. Schweickard, "*Etymologia est origo vocabulorum…* Zum Verständnis der Etymologiedefinition Isidors von Sevilla", *Historiographia Linguistica* 12 (1985), 1–25; Amsler, *Etymology and Grammatical Discourse in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, Amsterdam 1989 and Fontaine, "Cohérence et originalité de l'étymologie isidorienne", *Homenaje a Eleuterio Elorduy*, Bilbao 1978, 113–144. For the use of this method in *de fide catholica* see Isidore's explanation of the name of Christ: *Christus enim a chrismate, id est, ab unctione vocatur* (*fid. cath.* I, 3, 2; PL 83, 454).

[202] According to Fontaine (*Isidore de Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique*, Paris 1959/83, 813) Isidore's use of reason was limited to thinking along the lines of analogy. For the increasing invocation of human reason in the argument conducted against the Jews in the high middle ages see Dahan, "L'Usage de la *ratio* dans la polémique contre les juifs. XIIe–XIVe siècles", *Diálogo filosófico-religioso entre cristianismo, judaísmo e islamismo durante la edad media en la Península Ibérica*, Turnhout 1994, 289–307

between the Old and the New Testament is very rich and diverse; some
of the verbs denote a diachronic relationship,[203] others establish a con-
nection according to the Saussurian model of *signifiant—signifié*;[204] still
others do not qualify the relationship at all. A similar terminological
plurality can be noted in Jerome and in Isidore's *allegoriae*.[205]

The wonders performed by Christ according to the gospels are inter-
preted as signs pointing to his rank and office; but it is significant that
these signs can only be decoded on the basis of faith, which is said to be
a precondition for a correct understanding and interpretation of scrip-
ture.[206] Since faith is considered to be the basis of biblical hermeneu-
tics, which in turn has to be strengthened and buttressed by means of
biblical prooftexts, Isidore feels free to limit his interpretation to those
parts of the text he deems relevant to his argument; rarely does he
give an explanation of all the details. It is probably due to the pri-
macy accorded to faith that his argument occasionally appears to be
illogical and hard to follow; the author does not intend to give a ratio-
nal explanation of Christian dogma, which would require an induc-
tive construction on the basis of biblical prooftexts. He rather draws
his conclusions deductively, often adding unconvincing testimonies that
hardly prove his assertions;[207] this is not only true when the analysis is

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and Patschovsky, "Feindbilder der Kirche. Juden und Ketzer im Vergleich", *Juden und
Christen zur Zeit der Kreuzzüge*, Sigmaringen 1999, 353f. The Spanish Augustinian Jacob
Pérez of Valencia, writing at the end of the 15th century, declared that only rational
arguments acceptable to both Jews and Christians had any chance of making the
very slightest impression on the former; cf. Rasmussen, "Jacob Pérez of Valencia's
Tractatus contra Judeos (1484) in the Light of Medieval Anti-Judaic Traditions", *Augustine,
the Harvest, and Theology*, Leiden *et al.* 1990, 41–59. Interestingly enough the author(s) of
the 12th-century *Opusculum de conversione sua* of Hermannus quondam Iudaeus relegate
"reason" to second place, while prayer, piety and charity are presented as being far
more effective in the conversion process of the Jewish "hero"; cf. Schmitt, *La conversion
d'Hermann le Juif*, Paris 2003, 177.

[203] *praedicere, praefari, praescribere, praemittere, praedicare, annuntiare, praenuntiare, pronuntiare,
praeloqui, prophetare, praenotare, praecanere, memorare, meminisse*.

[204] *significare, designare, insinuare, ostendere, demonstrare, monstrare, manifestare, testari, annotare*.

[205] Fontaine, "Isidore de Séville pédagogue et théoricien de l'exégèse", *Stimuli. Exegese
und ihre Hermeneutik in Antike und Christentum*, Münster 1996, 428 note 24.

[206] According to Isidore it is the function of prophetic texts to serve as proof for the
reports of the gospels (*fid. cath.* I, 33, 1; PL 83, 483). Old Testament signs were fulfilled
at the advent of Christ (*fid. cath.* I, 16, 2; II, 3, 11; PL 83, 475. 507).

[207] E.g. *fid. cath.* I, 17 (PL 83, 475f.), an unconvincing interpretation of Is. 52, 6: *Ego
ipse, qui loquebar, ecce adsum*. In order to prove that God had promised to let himself be
seen by man Isidore interprets several biblical passages in an extremely literal sense,
contrary to his usual exegetical practice. He denies a metaphorical interpretation of "to

confined to the Latin text,[208] but also if the Greek and Hebrew versions of the prooftexts are taken into account.[209] Often his conclusions can only have appeared "convincing" to people already securely rooted in Christian faith. It emerges that Isidore chooses his method in accordance with the result he wishes to achieve. Such an argument can only be convincing in the eyes of addressees who are principally inclined to believe his argument; Isidore does not expect any readers who search for weak spots in his exposition or who approach his conclusions from a critical perspective.

Therefore, the force of Isidore's argument is quite variable. As he tries to deduce every single detail of the passion story from Old Testament prooftexts, he has to include weak and unconvincing evidence. It is safe to assume that he had no intention to convince Jews of the truth of Christianity; it is much more probable that he wanted to strengthen the faith of Christians who had already accepted the basic tenets of Christian doctrine, which the author tried to corroborate with the help of biblical testimonies. He wanted to provide his addressees with additional information regarding details of the gospel stories and the teaching of the Catholic church.

Isidore bases his argument on the model of the multiple sense of scripture, which allows the deduction of different conclusions from biblical passages according to the needs felt by the author.[210] The two

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see" such as "to know", insisting on the interpretation of the passages as a reference to the corporal presence of God.

[208] See e.g. *fid. cath.* II, 26, 4 (PL 83, 535); *fid. cath.* I, 30 (PL 83, 482).

[209] *fid. cath.* I, 36, 1 (PL 83, 485). In this case his exegesis is based on an interpretation of the verb *fodere*, meaning "to pierce through" (applied to Christ's crucifixion). However, the Greek probably means "to dig out", which may be intended also by the unclear Hebrew parallel. Isidore shows no awareness of any possible objections to his interpretation.

[210] For the history of biblical hermeneutics in the early church see Gerber, "Exegese III (Neues Testament und Alte Kirche)", *RAC* 6 (1966), 1218f; Pépin, "Hermeneutik", *RAC* 14 (1988), 762–769; Spitz, *Die Metaphysik des geistigen Schriftsinns. Ein Beitrag zur allegorischen Bibelauslegung des ersten christlichen Jahrtausends*, Münster 1976; Pollmann, *"Doctrina Christiana". Untersuchungen zu den Anfängen der christlichen Hermeneutik unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von Augustinus, De doctrina christiana*, Fribourg 1996; Dumais, "Sens de l'Écriture. Réexamen à la lumière de l'herméneutique philosophique et des approches littéraires récents", *NTSt* 45 (1999), 310–331; Fiedrowicz, *Prinzipien der Schriftauslegung in der Alten Kirche*, Bern *et al.* 1998. For pagan and Jewish parallels see Siegert, "Homerinterpretation—Tora-Unterweisung—Bibelauslegung. Vom Ursprung der patristischen Hermeneutik", *Studia Patristica* 25, Leuven 1993, 159–171; Genot-Bismuth, "De l'idée juive du sens", *Hommage à Georges Vajda. Études d'histoire et de pensée juives*, Louvain 1980, 105–116; Vian, "La tradizione filologica alessandrina tra giudaismo e cristianesimo",

main methods he uses are allegory and typology; the latter establishes
a relationship between a type and an antitype that retains the inde-
pendent meaning of the earlier element,[211] while the former denies
any independent meaning to the earlier level, which is accorded fig-
urative significance only. Late antique Latin exegetes used the princi-
ples laid down in the handbook of Tyconius in the 4th century, which
had been expounded also by Augustine.[212] Isidore knew both Augus-
tine and the version provided by Tyconius.[213] He expounds the prin-
ciples of Christian exegesis in a chapter of his theological *summa*, the
sententiae,[214] but he also dedicates a whole chapter of his treatise against
the Jews to this matter.[215] From his perspective the entire Old Testa-
ment has to be understood spiritually, as an exposition of Christian
doctrine.[216]

    Already in his probably earliest work, the *differentiae*, Isidore presents
an outline of his view regarding the typological relationship between
the two testaments.[217] Christ and the Law are thought to be mutually
interdependent.[218] The Old Testament containes signs of the New;[219] it
can only be understood when it is typologically related to it, the link

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Cassiodorus 4 (1998), 187–197. For Isidore's views on a varying number of possible spir-
itual interpretations see *dif.* II, 39, 154f. (PL 83, 94); see also Greg. Mag. *moral.*, *ep. ad
Leandrum* 3 (CCL 143, 4) and John Cassian *coll.* VIII, 3 (CSEL 13, 219).
    [211] For a biblical formulation of the typological principle see 1Cor. 10, 6. 11; Rom.
5, 14 and 1 Pt. 3, 21. For an exposition by patristic authors see Jerome, *ep.* 129, 6,
3 (CSEL 56/1, 173); August. *enarr. in Ps.* 67, 9 (CCL 39, 874). See also Bultmann,
"Ursprung und Sinn der Typologie als hermeneutischer Methode", *ThLZ* 75 (1950),
205–212 and Ostmeyer, "Typologie und Typos. Analyse eines schwierigen Verhält-
nisses", *NTSt* 46 (2000), 112–131; for Isidore's method Ogara, "Tipología bíblica según
S. Isidoro", *Miscellanea Isidoriana*, Rome 1936, 135–150.
    [212] *doctr. christ.* III, 30–37 (CCL 32, 102–116).
    [213] Zarb, "Sancti Isidori cultus erga sacras litteras", *Miscellanea Isidoriana*, Rome 1936,
126 and Cazier, "Le *Livre des règles* de Tyconius", *REA* 19 (1973), 241–261. See now
Kannengiesser, "Tyconius of Carthage", *Historiam perscrutari*, Rome 2002, 297–311.
    [214] *sent.* I, 19, 6 (CCL 111, 66f.).
    [215] *Scriptura non solum historialiter sed etiam mystice intelligenda est* (*fid. cath.* II, 20; PL 83,
528–529).
    [216] *fid. cath.* II, 20, 2 (PL 83, 528). In his principal exegetical work, the *quaestiones*, he
claims that allegorical exegesis is backed by apostolic authority, adducing 1Cor. 10, 11
(*quaest. de Machabaeis* 3; PL 83, 424). This verse is also quoted *quaest. in Num.* 15, 12; *eccl.
off.* II, 25, 1 (CCL 113, 102) it is paraphrased as *et in typo et in figura*.
    [217] *dif.* II, 33, 126 (PL 83, 89f.). See also *quaest. in Gen. praef.* 1 (PL 83, 207).
    [218] *quaest. in Num.* 15, 11 (PL 83, 317). See also *eccl. off.* I, 11, 2 (CCL 113, 9f.).
    [219] *fid. cath.* II, 28, 2 (PL 83, 536). For an understanding of the entire Old Testament
sub specie aeternitatis see *fid. cath.* II, 15, 9 (PL 83, 524): *Sic ergo omnia, quaecunque illis Iudaeis
per legem acciderunt, formidabiliter intelligenda sunt.*

being provided by the Holy Spirit.[220] The Old Testament by itself is a shadow which concealed the truth.[221]

Isidore feels justified in searching for a multiple sense in scripture by the Bible itself.[222] Following Origen, the doctrine of the threefold sense had been elaborated in Latin by Jerome.[223] Isidore expounds this theory in several places of his œuvre.[224] The doctrine of the fourfold sense of scripture, propounded by John Cassian,[225] Augustine,[226] and later by Bede[227] and Hrabanus Maurus,[228] was not taken over by him. On Iberian soil this doctrine was received only later, in the writings of Heterius of Osma and Beatus of Liébana, possibly following the pseudo-Isidorian *liber de variis quaestionibus*.[229]

Isidore uses the image of Noah's ark as a symbol for the threefold sense of scripture; he claims that according to the Bible the ark was built *bicamerata* and *tricamerata*.[230] However, this is only partially supported by the report on the flood in the book of Genesis; according to Gen. 6, 16 the ark consists of three floors.[231] According to Isidore the spiritual dimension of scripture in its three different senses can only be

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[220] *quaest. in Ex.* 49, 2 (PL 83, 313).

[221] *fid. cath.* II, 28, 2 (PL 83, 537). See also *sent.* I, 20, 3 (CCL 111, 72): *Sub veteri testamento … non ipsa veritas sed umbra veritatis aderat.* The metaphor of the shadow had been part of the Christian tradition for a long time; cf. Tert. *adv. Marc.* V, 19, 9 (Evans, 634). Jerome describes the conversion of a "pagan" to Christianity as follows: … *per Legis iter ad Evangelium pergere* (*in Gal.* I, 3; PL 26, 350).

[222] *Scribe legem dupliciter, et tripliciter in corde tuo* (Prov. 22, 20: *fid. cath.* II, 20, 2; PL 83, 528). This passage had already been used by Origen when he developed the first Christian hermeneutics; see *princ.* IV, 2, 4 (Görgemanns/Karpp, 708) and for the Latin tradition Jerome *in Ez.* V, 16; XII, 41 (CCL 75, 194f. 599).

[223] *ep.* 120, 12 (CSEL 55, 513f.) and *in Am.* II, 4–6 (CCL 76, 261f.).

[224] *Summa autem utriusque Testamenti trifarie distinguitur: id est in historia, in moribus, in allegoria* (*etym.* VI, 1, 11). See also *dif.* II, 39, 154 (PL 83, 94) and *fid. cath.* II, 20, 2 (PL 83, 528f.): *Tripliciter autem scribitur, dum non solum historialiter, vel mystice, sed etiam moraliter.* Isidore credits Gregory the Great with explaining the book of Job according to the double spiritual sense (Isid. *vir. ill.* XXVII; Codoñer, 148).

[225] *coll.* XIV, 8 (CSEL 13, 404f.).

[226] *util. cred.* 5 (CSEL 25/1, 7f.); *Gen. ad litt. imperf.* 2 (CSEL 28/1, 461); *Gen. ad litt.* I, 1 (CSEL 28/1, 3). See Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law*, Berkeley *et al.* 1999, 45.

[227] On the reception of Isidore by Bede see McCready, "Bede and the Isidorian Legacy", *Medieval Studies* 57 (1995), 41–74; id., "Bede, Isidore, and the *Epistula Cuthberti*", *Traditio* 50 (1996), 75–94.

[228] Lubac, *Exégèse Médiévale*, Paris 1959/64, I, 139.

[229] Ibid. 142.

[230] *fid. cath.* II, 20, 3 (PL 83, 529). See also *lib. num.* IV, 14 (PL 83, 182): *Arca etiam diluvii tricamerata construitur.* Gregory of Elvira compared the three parts of the ark to the three groups of *caticumini*, *competentes* and *fideles* (*tract. orig.* XII, 22; CCL 69, 95).

[231] For the deduction of the theory of the threefold sense of scripture from the biblical

grasped inside the church.[232] Because Christian faith is the precondition for any true understanding of the Bible, its full dimension cannot be realized by the Jews.[233] This supposed unfaithfulness or incredulity of the Jews, their incapacity to grasp the spiritual sense of scripture, was allegedly foretold in the Old Testament.[234] The only key to understand the Bible is said to be Christ, who is present exclusively in the church.[235] Christ and Christian faith are declared to be essential hermeneutic tools for interpreting and understanding the Old Testament.[236]

In his *sententiae* Isidore claims that the negation of the spiritual understanding of scripture is one of the origins of heresy, which highlights the fundamental importance of the model of the multiple scriptural sense for the teaching of the Catholic church.[237] Although in his treatise *de fide catholica* the charge of lacking capacity to understand the Bible is levelled only against the Jews, in general the controversy with both heretics and Jews appears to be basically a hermeneutic argument about the methodological foundations of biblical exegesis.[238] According to Isidore, the lowest level of scriptural understanding is the *gestorum fides*, while the various aspects of spiritual understanding are referred to as *quantum ad sacramentum prophetiae pertinet*.[239] As a rule, biblical prophecy is thought to be fulfilled in the New Testament.[240]

In order to provide church doctrine with scriptural foundation, the spiritual sense was generally accorded higher importance than the historical or literal one.[241] One of the traditional charges directed by Chris-

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ark see also Orig. *hom. in Gen.* II, 6 (SC 7, 106) and Ruf. Aquil. *bened. patriarch.* II, 14 (CCL 20, 212).

[232] *fid. cath.* II, 20, 3 (PL 83, 529).

[233] Ibid.

[234] *fid. cath.* II, 21, 1 (PL 83, 529).

[235] *Neque enim possunt legem et prophetas intelligere, nisi ante in Christum crediderint* (*fid. cath.* II, 22, 1; PL 83, 529). See also *quaest. in Ex.* 43, 3 (PL 83, 310).

[236] A case in point is the interpretation of the sabbath, which can supposedly only be understood through Christ: *Ipse est enim requies animarum, sicut et idem ait: Discite a me, quia mitis sum, et humilis corde, et invenietis requiem animabus vestris* (Mt. 11, 29: *fid. cath.* II, 15, 8; PL 83, 524).

[237] *sent.* III, 12, 2 (CCL 111, 234).

[238] See also—without explicit reference to the Jews—*quaest. in Gen.* 15, 9 (PL 83, 246). The capacity to understand the connection between both Testaments is, according to Gregory the Great, a gift of God; after the advent of Christ it is therefore reserved to the church (*moral.* XVIII, 39, 60; CCL 143 A, 926 f.).

[239] *quaest. in I Reg.* 15, 1–2 (PL 83, 403).

[240] *fid. cath.* I, 5, 8; I, 38, 1 (PL 83, 462. 486).

[241] *quaest. in Gen. praef.* 3 f. (PL 83, 208). For a negation of the historical sense see Isidore's interpretation of Is. 45, 1 in *fid. cath.* I, 3, 2 f. (PL 83, 454 f.). However, in the

tian polemicists against Jews was the allegation that they stubbornly stuck to the letter, neglecting and denying any spiritual dimension.[242] This dichotomous construction of Judaism and Christianity does, however, not correspond to the exegetical practice. On the one hand there was a long tradition of Jewish spiritual, figurative exegesis (which did not, of course, regard Jesus Christ as the key to decipher the true "significance" of Old Testament texts), and on the other a number of renowned church fathers proclaimed the importance, at times even the priority of literal exegesis.[243]

The second level of scriptural interpretation is allegorical or typological exegesis. Isidore's treatise *de fide catholica* can be interpreted as a work on the origins of Christian faith, which he tries to identify in the Old Testament, which allegedly cannot be understood without Christ as the one and only hermeneutical key.[244] In accordance with his preference of etymological explanations the author argues that the change from the Old to the New Testament, from literal to spiritual sense, was predicted by a change of names from Joshua to Jesus.[245] In line with patristic exegesis he presents Joshua as the type of Jesus, the link between the two being indicated by the meaning of their names. He uses *etymologia* as a method which proceeds from the establishment of the origin of a word through an *interpretatio* to the realization of the *vis*, the true and proper meaning.[246] The interpretation consists in elucidating the *signifié*, which is represented and hinted at by the

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Etymologies he declares his intention to limit his argument to an exposition of the literal sense; see *etym.* VII, 6, 2. In his treatise *de ortu et obitu patrum* he explains the life of biblical persons principally according to the literal sense, whereas in his *allegoriae* the mystical dimension receives far greater attention; therefore the two works may have been conceived as counterparts; see Chaparro Gómez, *De ortu et obitu patrum*, Paris 1985, 16.

[242] See e.g. Greg. Mag. *moral.* XVIII, 39, 60 (CCL 143 A, 926).

[243] Jerome *ep.* 74, 6, 1 (CSEL 55, 28); *in Es.* V, 19 (VetLat 27, 558); *in Abd. prol.* (CCL 76, 349). Gregory the Great underlines the importance of an historical understanding for allegorical exegesis *hom. in Ev.* 40, 1 (CCL 141, 394). However, for him the truth is not limited to one level alone; it comprises all the different senses of scripture (*moral.* XXXV, 20, 48; CCL 143 B, 1809). For the importance of the *veritas historiae* for the other exegetical levels in Origen and Augustine cf. Lubac, *Exégèse Médiévale*, Paris 1959/64, I/2, 430–436.

[244] *quaest. in Gen.* 3, 11 (PL 83, 218).

[245] *fid. cath.* I, 6, 1 (PL 83, 463); cf. Num. 13, 17.

[246] *Etymologia est origo vocabulorum, cum vis verbi vel nominis per interpretationem colligitur* (*etym.* I, 29, 1). See Schweickard, "*Etymologia est origo vocabulorum*… Zum Verständnis der Etymologiedefinition Isidors von Sevilla", *Historiographia Linguistica* 12 (1985), 18. For the Platonic tradition of connecting the knowledge of things with the knowledge of their names see *Kratylos* 435d.

name.[247] However, Isidore does not provide a proper linguistic explanation in this case, which would have required some knowledge of Hebrew in order to show that the verbal root of "Joshua" is "to save". The origin of the name Joshua is provided only later, and it is not easy to grasp for people without a certain linguistic competence.[248] It is not very probable that many such persons were to be found in Visigothic Spain; Isidore does not have a critical reader in mind, but Christians who are inclined to follow ecclesiastical argument without hesitation.

This is another hint that Isidore's very short and summarizing argument[249] is not meant to convince people who may have doubts regarding the truth of his interpretation, it should rather be seen as a brief indication of a typological link for dogmatic purposes. His argument can only be understood after a thorough analysis of the biblical text. This is also evident in his explanation of the types of the cross contained in the Old Testament, one of which is the letter *taw* in its Old Hebrew form.[250] Not only does Isidore fail to notice that only the shape of the Old Hebrew letter is similar to a cross, but not the square character common in late antiquity;[251] he also fails to indicate the *tertium comparationis* explicitly, namely the similar shape of type and antitype, limiting his exposition to a statement of the salutary effects of the sign.

Isidore's interpretation of biblical prophecy is closely linked with the second level of scriptural interpretation. Traditionally Christ was not only seen as the key to a correct understanding of the scriptures; he was also regarded as the end of prophecy, fulfilling the biblical promises.[252] For Isidore, Isaiah is a preacher of the Christian gospel.[253] Christ is the

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[247] *Ad significandum illum verum Iesum*: The actions of Joshua have to interpreted as signs understandable only within the framework of salvation history. Cf. *etym.* VII, 1, 2: *Vocabulorum enim expositio satis indicat quid velit intellegi. Habent enim quaedam ex propriis causis nominum rationem.*

[248] *fid. cath.* I, 44, 2 (PL 83, 488): *Dominus enim Iesus, qui interpretatur Salvator.* Later Isidore returns to an explanation of the name (*fid. cath.* II, 24, 1; PL 83, 530). See also *etym.* VII, 2, 7.

[249] *fid. cath.* I, 6, 2 (PL 83, 463).

[250] *fid. cath.* II, 26, 1f. (PL 83, 534), following Ez. 9, 3–6.

[251] By contrast, Jerome does refer to this difference in his commentary (*in Ez.* III, 9; CCL 75, 106).

[252] Tert. *adv. Iud.* 11, 10 (Tränkle, 32); August. *in Joh.* 17, 15 (CCL 36, 178); *c. Faust.* 15, 2 (CSEL 25/1, 419). See Hvidt, "Prophecy and Revelation. A Theological Survey on the Problem of Christian Prophecy," *Studia Theologica. Scandinavian Journal of Theology* 52 (1998), 147–161 and McGinn, "Prophetic Power in Early Medieval Christianity", *Cristianesimo nella storia* 17 (1996), 251–269.

[253] *Esaias, evangelista potius quam propheta* (*etym.* VI, 2, 22); see also his preface to the

last and also the first of the prophets because all the other ones were merely his forerunners.[254] It was an important element in the Christian spiritualization of the Torah to credit the Old Testament with a mainly prophetic character, allegedly referring to Christ. The Jews, who had no more prophets in their midst, were charged with sticking to the carnal letter.[255] From that perspective it was only the prophetic origin of the Old Testament that legitimized its canonical standing.[256]

The third level of scriptural interpretation is moral or tropological exegesis.[257] Isidore demonstrates that biblical passages teach Christians a moral lesson.[258] Yet in an argument against the Jews moral exegesis plays only a very minor part, mainly in the context of the spiritual understanding of sabbath and dietary laws.[259] Typological exegesis is far more important because it constituted the main way to provide the dogmatic teaching of the church with scriptural proof.

Only rarely does Isidore refute Jewish objections, which are always based on a passage of scripture seemingly contradicting his exegesis. On occasion, this argument is conducted in three steps: the counter-argument is followed by partial assent voiced by the auther, only to be finally disproved.[260] In a few cases the author asks rhetorical questions,[261] in some passages he may have used a list of Jewish objections that he probably took from the arsenal of Christian literature *adversus Iudaeos*.[262] These fictitious counterarguments are used as bases for the exposition of the author's own argument.[263] This procedure is mainly

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book of Isaiah (*pro.* 47; PL 83, 167); *fid. cath.* I, 35, 3 (PL 83, 484); *quaest. in Gen.* 8, 6; 19, 4 (PL 83, 236. 252).

[254] *fid. cath.* II, 1, 13; II, 5, 3 (PL 83, 502. 509); *etym.* VI, 2, 36. Christ is the seal of prophecy (*all.* 140; PL 83, 117). According to *etym.* VII, 8, 31 John the Baptist is the *limes prophetiae*, but *finis* of the prophets is Christ (ibid., 32). For the end of prophecy see Sommer, "Did Prophecy Cease? Evaluating a Reevaluation", *JBL* 115 (1996), 31–47.

[255] August. *s.* 10, 3 (CCL 41, 155).

[256] *eccl. off.* I, 11, 1 (CCL 113, 9).

[257] *Cuncta illa spiritualiter discernimus in moribus hominum* (*fid. cath.* II, 28, 3; PL 83, 537f.).

[258] *Scripta sunt enim ad correptionem nostram* (*fid. cath.* II, 15, 9; PL 83, 524).

[259] *fid. cath.* II, 15, 8f.; II, 18, 1 (PL 83, 524. 527); *quaest. in Lev.* 9 (PL 83, 325ff.). For the predominance of moral exegesis in Gregory the Great see Markus, "The Jew as a Hermeneutic Device: The Inner Life of a Gregorian Topos", *Gregory the Great*, Notre Dame/London 1995, 8.

[260] *fid. cath.* I, 1, 5 (PL 83, 451).

[261] E.g. *fid. cath.* II, 15 (PL 83, 522f.).

[262] *Quod si respondeant, ad angelorum* (*fid. cath.* I, 3, 5; PL 83, 455). This Jewish interpretation of the plural form in Gen. 1, 26 is also refuted by Tert. *adv. Prax.* XII, 2 (CCL 2, 1172f.).

[263] E.g. *fid. cath.* I, 5, 5 (PL 83, 461).

restricted to the christological and trinitarian argument in the first part of the first book.[264] A similar approach can be found in Isidore's principal exegetical work, the *quaestiones in Vetus Testamentum*, which probably does not allude to real disputations with Jews, but which seems to be a reference to fictitious Jewish counterarguments.[265]

Occasional rhetorical exclamations are meant to appeal to the readers, they do not reflect actual experiences in controversies with Jews.[266] Isidore's only method to disclaim the Jewish point of view is the accumulation of scriptural passages;[267] the cascade of prooftexts is another indication that his addressees are not Jews, but Christian readers whose faith is to be reinforced by a barrage of biblical texts. At the end the "hermeneutical Jew" is always left without further objections he might direct against Christian teaching: *Inimici Christi … dum non habeant quod proponant*.[268] The only task remaining to the Jews is to be ashamed and to accept the Christian point of view.[269] Repeated calls upon the "incredulous Jews" to convert serve a double function: they are meant to show the alleged stubbornness of the Jews, and they are designed to render Christian readers immune against any possible Jewish objections.

The author composed his treatise for Christians who were not interested in questioning the results of his exegesis and who were probably not capable of doing so in the first place. Conclusions drawn by Jewish exegetes are disqualified because they allegedly lack the appropriate hermeneutical key. The Jews can read, but the meaning of the Bible is supposedly out of their reach, being closed like a sealed book.[270] Therefore an exegetical discussion with Jews would be senseless. However, Isidore neither asks nor answers the question who has sealed the book or closed the eyes of the Jews. He only states that Christ has disclosed

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[264] *fid. cath.* I, 3, 4 (PL 83, 455): *Si Christus Deus non est, dicant Iudaei nobis quem sit affatus Deus in Genesi*. The Jewish claim (*si Christus Dominus non est*) is repeated five times, in each case being refuted by a quotation from a different biblical passage.

[265] *Ubi sit frater eius. Usque nunc quid nobis respondent Iudaei, cum eos sanctarum Scripturarum voce interrogamus de Christo? Illi nescire se Christum respondent* (*quaest. in Gen.* 6, 6; PL 83, 224).

[266] *Sed, o duritia cordis Iudaici! Quia ipsi Christum interemerunt, inde eum adhuc venisse non credunt* (*fid. cath.* I, 5, 9; PL 83, 462).

[267] *Sed contra haec obiicit perniciosa Iudaeorum perfidia … Pro me ergo audiant Isaiam* (*fid. cath.* I, 4, 12; PL 83, 460).

[268] *fid. cath.* I, 5, 5 (PL 83, 461).

[269] *fid. cath.* I, 5, 3; I, 10, 2 (PL 83, 460. 468).

[270] *fid. cath.* I, 62, 1 (PL 83, 498). Cf. August. *adv. Iud.* I (PL 42, 51).

the meaning of the signs of the Old Testament to the Christians.[271] It is therefore no merit of the Christians to be able to understand the scriptures spiritually: *Habemus enim ad intelligendum Christum, ducem legem, testes prophetas*.[272] Priority is accorded not to reading the Old Testament, but to accepting the faith of Christ supposed to be the only way to understand it. Without a clarification of this fundamental hermeneutic precondition any discussion of exegetical particulars with Jews would be pointless.

It is no surprise that Isidore is convinced of the logic of his own argument, but he also assumes that the same must apply to the Jews.[273] He constructs his hermeneutical Jew on the basis of his own understanding of what a Jew is and should be, all of which is designed to serve Christian arguments. The only possible faith is Christian faith, the only possible interpretation is Christian exegesis. All biblical passages admitting Christian interpretation have necessarily to be understood accordingly.

In his refutation of Jewish interpretations Isidore is not original, but a follower and representative of patristic exegesis. A characteristic feature of Hebrew style, the repetition of phrases (*parallelismus membrorum*, similar to *hendiadyoin*) was traditionally interpreted by Christian exegetes as referring to two distinct phenomena.[274] Quite often passages in the Old Testament that were interpreted by Jews as referring to events in biblical times are said to be allusions to Christ. A case in point is the interpretation of the famous prophecy by Nathan in 1 Chr. 17.[275] Isidore explains that Solomon's rule started in the lifetime of his father David, whereas the ruler prophecied by Nathan was to appear only after David's death. In order to make this point he changes the wording of the biblical text, which he had initially quoted exactly in the Vulgate's version. The received text reads *cumque impleveris dies tuos*, but the author interprets the passage in a slightly yet significantly different version: *postquam dormieris cum patribus tuis*. The temporal qualification is made more specific, the promised offspring will now come only after David's death, but not at the end of his life.[276] It should be noted that

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[271] *fid. cath.* I, 62, 2 (PL 83, 499).

[272] *fid. cath.* I, 62, 2 (PL 83, 499). For Cyprian's position cf. *testim.* I, 5 (CCL 3, 10f.).

[273] *Quibus omnibus testimoniis cogendus est infidelis, ut eligat sibi de duobus, aut Christum Filium Dei credere, aut mendaces putare prophetas, qui ista cecinerunt* (*fid. cath.* I, 1, 8; PL 83, 452).

[274] E.g. *fid. cath.* I, 3, 1f. (PL 83, 454).

[275] *fid. cath.* I, 9, 3 (PL 83, 465).

[276] 1 Chr. 17, 11. Jerome translates the temporal relations correctly; the Hebrew text could refer to the time just before David's death; this is possible also according to the

Isidore purposefully manipulates the biblical text just quoted by him-
self in order to arrive at a certain conclusion; he feels justified in doing
so because he is about to prove orthodox Christian teaching, which
also constitutes the basis of his argument. Only the reading *postquam*
makes the Jewish interpretation untenable. However, readers not yet
convinced of the truth of Christian doctrine can hardly have thought
this procedure an irrefutable argument.

    This is also apparent in the passage where he tries to refute the
Jewish objection that the prophets worked many miracles.[277] In order to
prove Christ's incomparable qualities, Isidore points to his resurrection
and ascension; none of the prophets achieved anything similar. It is
striking that he claims that through the omnipotence of Christ many
similar things have been accomplished (*plura quoque et his similia eius
omnipotentia facta sunt*). This may refer to miracles worked by Christian
saints, but it would have been difficult to convince Jewish opponents of
the veracity of "similar" miracles such as resurrection and ascension.
The reference to *plura similia* is meant to reassure Christian readers
who are disposed to a willing and faithful reception of his argument;
it could have been easily disproved by people doubting the truth of his
argument.

    Isidore's poof is unconvincing in Jewish eyes, but his only escape
consists in accumulating more and more scriptural prooftexts. There
is no real communication with Jews because they are required to accept
Christ first; conversion is conceived of as an essential precondition for
meaningful communication, not as a result of it.

2.3. *Theology*

2.3.1. Fides

Isidore's argument against the Jews is about faith, as indicated in the
title of his treatise. The second book, which discusses questions of eccle-
siology, starts with an exposition on faith, so that *fides* appears as the

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Septuagint version. The reading *postquam* preferred by Isidore is neither found in the
parallel text at 2 Sam. 7, 12 (Vulgate): *Cumque conpleti fuerint dies tui et dormieris cum patribus
tuis.*
    [277] *fid. cath.* I, 16, 5 (PL 83, 475).

basis of the church.[278] For the people of God, the chosen *gens* of the New Israel, faith is the decisive criterion. *Fides* is principally treated as the *fides quae creditur* in the Augustinian sense, as something to be believed; the act of believing, the *fides qua creditur*, is left out.[279] This may be due to the exegetical character of the text, and it can be put into the context of Isidore's failure to describe conversion and instruction in the faith, which had occupied an important position in patristic tradition.[280] Theodoret of Cyrrhus had insisted that faith required knowledge (*gnōsis*), which in turn rests on instruction; yet according to him faith precedes knowledge.[281] In the light of this it is significant that instruction played no part whatsoever in the Goths' conversion to Catholicism. Isidore ascribes this conversion only to his brother Leander's faith; instruction is brought about by living faith itself.[282] In *de fide catholica* Isidore sketches an entirely static and dogmatic picture of faith; he does not discuss the internal development of the faithful. By contrast, in the *sententiae* he describes conversion as a process comprising three different stages; in the final analysis, conversion is a lifelong task that is never completed.[283]

Another point that received great attention in the early church but which is entirely neglected in *de fide catholica* is the question of individual decisions.[284] As indicated above in connection with the only marginal

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[278] See also *quaest. in I Reg.* 16, 3 (PL 83, 404) and Ild. Tol. *cogn. bapt. praef.* (Campos Ruiz, 236).

[279] For Augustine's distinction see *trin.* XIII, 2, 5 (CCL 50 A, 386); for the *fides qua creditur* ibid. XIV, 8, 11 (CCL 50 A, 438). For a definition of the *fides qua creditur* by Isidore see *dif.* I, 16 (Codoñer, 92): *Fides est credulitas qua Deum confitemur*.

[280] For initiation in the early church see Orig. *c. Cels.* II, 4 (SC 132, 288): Instruction starts with reading the pentateuch and the prophets. After the *eisagoge*, those who are now initiated receive an exposition according to the spiritual sense. The most important element of initiation is therefore the instruction in scriptural understanding, which probably took place in the catechetical school. For "higher education" see Scholten, "Die alexandrinische Katechetenschule", *JbAC* 38 (1995), 16–37 and van den Hoek, "The 'Catechetical' School of Early Christian Alexandria and its Philonic Heritage", *HThR* 90 (1997), 59–87.

[281] *Graec. affect.* I, 92f. (SC 57, 128).

[282] Isid. *vir. ill.* XXVIII (Codoñer, 149). For an understanding of the *conversio ad fidem* it is remarkable that according to Gregory the Great the children of those converts who had been induced by material incentives to accept baptism would later have stronger ties with the church than their parents (*iam fidelius baptizantur*: *ep.* V, 7; CCL 140, 273). The comparative use of *fidelis* is an indication that Gregory conceives of different levels of approximation to *fides*. This is borne out by *moral.* XXIV, 11, 28 (CCL 143 B, 1207), where he distinguishes three stages of conversion (*incohatio, medietas, perfectio*).

[283] *sent.* II, 8, 1 (CCL 111, 108).

[284] "… the whole religion (sc. Christianity) was established upon the idea of conver-

role of the moral sense of scripture in this treatise, the author leaves out
any discussion of problems connected with moral theology; he focuses
on exegetical and dogmatic questions instead. This is in stark con-
trast to his principal exegetical work, the *quaestiones in Vetus Testamentum*,
where he repeatedly admonishes readers to follow the steps of the saints
and be aware of the importance of good works.[285] Yet in *de fide catholica*,
good works and their significance for faith are not discussed,[286] nor are
ethical questions which Isidore himself calls an essential element of faith
elsewhere.[287] The neglect of moral theology is also reflected in the fail-
ure to discuss faith, the topic of his exposition, as one of the Christian
cardinal virtues besides hope and charity.[288]

In his treatise against the Jews Isidore leaves out the anthropological
and personal foundations of faith;[289] consequently he fails to discuss the
important question how belief, the *fides qua creditur*,[290] can be instilled
in converted Jews who did not voluntarily embrace Christianity (if
there were any such converts at the time the treatise was composed).
The only conclusion is that the initiative rests with God alone. The
latter view, seeing God as the sole origin of faith, could be based on

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sion, i.e. choice." (Stroumsa, "From Anti-Judaism to Antisemitism in Early Christian-
ity?", *Contra Iudaeos. Ancient and Medieval Polemics between Christians and Jews*, Tübingen
1996, 18).

[285] *quaest. in Gen.* 1, 13; 31, 24 (PL 83, 211. 280). For *imitatio Christi* cf. *dif.* II, 34, 135
(PL 83, 91), where Isidore advocates a combination of *vita activa* and *contemplativa* after
the example of Christ (*iuxta imitationem Christi*); see also *etym.* VII, 14, 3; *eccl. off.* I, 30, 6f.
(CCL 13, 34) and *syn.* II, 22 (PL 83, 850). For *imitatio Christi* as a call to engage in study
and theological reflection cf. *sent.* II, 11, 11 (CCL 111, 117). It is significant that no such
statements can be found in *de fide catholica*.

[286] In this treatise Isidore does not adduce the letter of James; therefore he does not
refer to James 2, 20. It is interesting that in the *sententiae* he does refer to this passage in
the chapter *de fide*: *Vacuam esse sine operibus fidem* (*sent.* II, 2, 8; CCL 111, 95); the verse is
also quoted *dif.* II, 35, 137 (PL 83, 91). For the significance of works see also *sent.* II, 19,
2 (CCL 111, 133) and *all.* 198 (PL 83, 124). For a parallelization of faith and good works
cf. *quaest. in Ex.* 33, 2 (PL 83, 304) and *lib. num.* III, 12 (PL 83, 181). For the significance
of works for the life to come see *quaest. in Ex.* 23, 6 (PL 83, 298).

[287] *eccl. off.* II, 24, 4 (CCL 113, 100).

[288] However, in *dif.* II, 36, 139 (PL 83, 92) Isidore declares that all three virtues are
indispensable. There is a telling difference to Augustine's treatise *de catechizandis rudibus*,
which does, however, belong to a totally different genre. According to Augustine the
principal aim of Christian instruction is the teaching of charity (*cat. rud.* III, 6; CCL 46,
125).

[289] For the mental preconditions of faith cf. August. *praed. sanct.* II, 5 (PL 44, 962f.).

[290] For an association of faith (*fides*) and the act of believing (*credere*) see *nat. rer.* 46, 3
(Fontaine 321, 19ff.): ... *ad fidem conversio ... utique ad credendum.* For the *fides qua creditur* see
also *etym.* VIII, 2, 4: *Fides est qua veraciter credimus id quod nequaquam videre valemus.*

Mt. 16, 17b, where Peter's profession is ascribed to divine revelation. According to 1 Cor. 12, 3b, nobody can call Jesus the Lord without the Holy Spirit. The statement of John of Biclaro on the conversion of Reccared (*Reccaredus … catholicus deo iuvante efficitur*)[291] may contain a standard expression, but it should be noted that the author does not refer to any human intervention, let alone initiative, in the conversion process.

In his dedicatory letter to Sisebut accompanying the treatise *de natura rerum* Isidore stresses the aspect of reliability and truthfulness inherent in the term *fides*; he adduces the views of several pagan and Christian authorities which are meant to corroborate his argument.[292] It is noteworthy that his words are similar to those he uses in the dedication of *de fide catholica* to Florentina: … *ut prophetarum auctoritas fidei gratiam firmet*;[293] in both cases *fides*, meaning faith and credibility, rests on the authority of the testimonies found in Christian or classical tradition. Faith is the foundation of religion;[294] this image corresponds to the one used in his dedicatory letter to Florentina, for whose "edification" Isidore declares to have written his exposition.

An important aspect of *fides* is its character as a treaty or covenant between man and God.[295] Already in the acts of the 3rd council of Toledo *fides* is considered to be a duty that has to be fulfilled towards God.[296] Therefore, an important aspect is faithfulness, which establishes a link to *sacramentum* in the sense of oath.[297] Institutionally *fides* is tied

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[291] *chron. ad a.* 587, 5 (Campos, 95).

[292] … *ut ipsorum auctoritas dictorum fidem efficiat* (*nat. rer. praef.* 3; Fontaine 139, 25). See also his definition *etym.* V, 24, 17: *Nam fides dicta eo quod fiat.* Cf. Cic. *off.* I, 7, 23 and *rep.* IV, 7. See also August. *s.* 49, 2 (CCL 41, 615) and *ep.* 82, 22 (CSEL 34/2, 374). See also Isidore's explanation of the term *fidelis* (*etym.* X, 98): *Fidelis, pro eo quod fit ab eo id quod dicit vel promittit bonum*; cf. *syn.* II, 58 (PL 83, 858).

[293] *fid. cath. ep. dedic.*: PL 83, 449 f.

[294] *dif.* II, 36, 139 (PL 83, 92).

[295] *etym.* VIII, 2, 4. See also *dif.* I, 16 (Codoñer, 92). The promise given at baptism is referred to as follows (*eccl. off.* II, 25, 5; CCL 113, 104): *Duae sunt namque pactiones credentium.* This is reflected also in IV Toledo *c.* 64 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 240). This reminds of Isidore's statement regarding the neglect of a promise as a breach of the *fides* (*syn.* II, 58; PL 83, 858): *Inter infideles computantur, qui quod voverunt, non impleverunt.* Augustine refers to the reciprocal aspect of *fides* when he explains that the catechumens already believe in Christ, but the latter has not yet entrusted himself to them (*in Joh.* 11, 3; CCL 36, 111). For the mutual aspect cf. also Ild. Tol. *cogn. bapt.* 114 (Campos Ruiz, 346).

[296] *Regis professio fidei* (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 63).

[297] *syn.* II, 56 (PL 83, 858).

to the church.[298] It is significant that *fides* has also social and political overtones; a ruler deviating from faith is to be judged by his subjects.[299]

Fides is rooted in biblical revelation.[300] Only faith provides the key to a spiritual understanding of scripture.[301] Because faith precedes spiritual knowledge, it is questionable whether Jews can achieve "true" understanding in the Christian sense at all. If the Jews do not believe in Christ, having no faith in him, an argument based on the "true" interpretation of scriptural passages cannot work, because to be effective it would need prior faith. Consequently faith is presented as the beginning, not as the end of spiritual growth and development, but Isidore does not give a clue how faith can be brought about in people without *fides*. He does not claim that partaking of the Christian sacraments has the power to produce faith.[302] The only solution is that God himself will bring about the conversion of the Jews at the end of time.

Isidore does not use *fides* nor any other positive term to denote the Jewish religion; he refers to it as *perfidia* or *incredulitas*.[303] In Visigothic law the Jewish religion is mostly referred to as *superstitio*, as distinct from the Christian *fides*. This language is also used in the *placitum* the Jews of Toledo had to subscribe in 637/38.[304] It is striking that Isidore avoids the term *superstitio* in the treatise *de fide catholica*, but not in other works.[305]

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[298] *quaest. in Ex.* 50, 2 (PL 83, 313).

[299] *sent.* III, 39, 6 (CCL 111, 282): *erit arguendus a subditis*; cf. Diesner, "Isidors Herrscherauffassung im Zwielicht", *Los Visigodos. Historia y Civilización*, Murcia 1986, 304.

[300] *fid. cath.* I, 10, 1 (PL 83, 468).

[301] *fid. cath.* I, 35, 2 (PL 83, 484).

[302] This is a position implied by Venantius Fortunatus when he claims that the Jews are in fact willing to convert, but that they are prevented from doing so by the devil; the author may have thought that distributing the sacraments to seemingly unwilling persons could in fact provide the basis for the force of the sacrament to become effective later, which might turn the already existing wish to convert into reality; cf. *vit. sanct. Germ.* 62 (MGH, SRM, VII, 409): *Sigericus quidam Iudaeus, fidei sacramento percepto, conversus est.* King (*Law and Society in the Visigothic Kingdom*, Cambridge 1972, 136) indicates that belief in magical effects of the sacraments was not current in Visigothic Spain; however, his sources are only from the second half of the 7th century.

[303] See also Quiricus of Barcelona, *ep. ad Ildef.* I, 2 (PL 96, 193): … *incredulus ac mente perfidus decidat Judaeus*. The charge of *perfidia* was a topos of Christian literature; cf. IV Tol. *c.* 58 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 236). In the *Liber Ordinum* (ed. Férotin 160, 39–41) the term *perfidia* is applied to heretics who should be struck with fear at the sound of church bells; in this they are compared to Jews.

[304] *Confessio Iudaeorum* (PL Suppl. 4, 1666); see *supra*, p. 31.

[305] *etym.* VIII, 4, 9: *Iudaeis … quorum superstitio*. He defines it *etym.* VIII, 3, 6: *Superstitio dicta eo quod sit superflua aut superinstituta observatio*. See also *dif.* I, 16 (Codoñer, 92): *Religio autem est in virtute, superstitio vero in cultu inlicito.* For the tradition of this definition cf. Jakobi, "*Superstitio* bei Donat, Servius und Isidor", *Hermes* 118 (1990), 252–253. Augustine

For him Judaism is equivalent to apostasy, unfaithfulness and rebellion against God; therefore faith is alleged to have ended among the Jews.[306] Their supposed unfaithfulness and disobedience[307] is contrasted with faith and obedience found among gentile Christians.[308] Apostasy is closely linked with *perfidia*.[309]

In his treatise against the Jews Isidore restricts the use of the term *perfidia* to the Jews, but it is significant that in other works he also applies it to heretics.[310] Therefore it should not be translated simply as "unbelief", but rather as "rebellion" or "treason".[311] Apostasy from faith, which for Isidore exists only as faith in Christ, is conceived of as treason against God. People living in the Visigothic kingdom did not understand *perfidia* simply as "unbelief", which can be demonstrated on

refers to the alleged clinging of the Jews to the literal sense of the Bible as *vana superstitio* (*c. Faust.* 18, 7; CSEL 25/1, 496). See also Herrera García, "Concepto de religión y superstición en las *Etimologías* de san Isidoro de Sevilla", *Helmántica* 44 (1993), 527–534.

[306] *quaest. in Iud.* 4, 4 (PL 83, 383). See already Just. Mart. *dial.* 27, 4; 123, 3 (Marcovich, 114. 282). Origen also denies that the Jews have faith; cf. *hom. in Jer.* IX, 2 (SC 232, 382, 13 f.). Another opinion is expressed in a law enacted by King Reccesvinth (*LV* XII, 2, 15; MGH, LL, I, 1, 423): *Iudeos sive non baptizatos in sue observationis detestanda fide et consuetudine permanere*. For the use of *fides* with reference to the Jews see also Cassiod. *in Ps.* 117, 22 (CCL 98, 1055).

[307] *fid. cath.* II, 6, 3. 5 (PL 83, 511). They refuse to believe Christian teachings (*fid. cath.* I, 4, 12; PL 83, 460).

[308] *fid. cath.* II, 6, 3 (PL 83, 511).

[309] *Perfidus, quia fraudulentus est et sine fide, quasi perdens fidem* (*etym.* X, 222). From the time of John of Biclaro onwards *perfidia* became also a political term, denoting resistance to the legitimate authority of the king: "… le serment prêté au roi est en réalité prêté à Dieu, mettant ainsi sur le même plan la fidélité à Dieu et la fidélité au prince." (Teillet, *Des Goths à la nation gothique*, Paris 1984, 523). Julian of Toledo discusses rebellion against the ruler as a parallel to *infidelitas* against God (*Insultatio* 1 f.; CCL 115, 245); he surpasses Isidore in transferring religious vocabulary to the ruler, especially condemning political rebellion as *perfidia*; cf. Teillet, 617 ff.

[310] *Arianae perfidiae blasphemia* (*etym.* VI, 16, 6); see also *hist.* 50 (Rodríguez Alonso, 256, about the "tyrant" Leovigild: … *Arrianae perfidiae furore repletus*; Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 101) and *hist.* 53 (Rodríguez Alonso, 262; Wolf, 103) with reference to the conversion of the Goths: … *abdicans cum omnibus suis perfidiam quam hucusque Gothorum populus Arrio docente didicerat*. The application of *perfidia* to Arians has a long history; cf. Hilary of Poitiers, *de synodis* (PL 10, 535); Jerome, *adv. Rufinum* II, 16 (CCL 79, 50); John of Biclaro, *chron. ad a.* 590, 1 (Campos 98, 352): *Arrii perfidia* (*chron.* 92; Wolf, 75).

[311] Blumenkranz, "Perfidia", *Archivum Latinitatis Medii Aevi (Bulletin du Cange)* 22 (1952), 163: "Quand il se sert du terme *perfidia*, celui-ci prend un sens qui dépasse celui de la seule incroyance pour signifier 'incroyance malveillante', ou 'malicieuse'." Already in pre-Christian times the Romans understood *perfidia* as a breach of faith, as treason. The Carthagians served as an obvious example; cf. Livy XXI, 4, 9: *perfidia plus quam punica*; see Becker, "Fides", *RAC* 7 (1969), 814 f.

the basis of the acts of the 16th council of Toledo (693), whose first canon is directed against the *perfidia Iudaeorum*, while the 10th one denounces *perfidia* against the king, referring to illoyalty and rebellion.[312] *Perfidus* could be applied not only to pagans, but also to Jews and heretics;[313] therefore it can mean those who were thought to have no faith at all and those whose faith was deemed to be wrong or insufficient; however, the term did not necessarily imply moral degradation.[314] In Vernet's view the connotation of the term shifted. First *perfidia Iudaica* referred to the "unbelief" of the Jews, but later it lost all "intellectual" aspects, acquiring instead a moral connotation, which stigmatized alleged Jewish treason and craftiness.[315]

Isidore describes the conversion of the gentiles to Christianity as instruction in faith.[316] The *fides Christi* is inseparably linked to orthodox teaching and interpretation of the scriptures in the tradition of the Catholic church. The people of God is constituted by faith alone; faith is the link uniting the gentiles, and only faith justifies the position of gentile nations within the framework of the economy of salvation.[317] The historical significance of these nations is no longer based on their respective particular, "profane" traditions; it rather resides in their mission, in their contribution to the ongoing process of salvation history, which they make through faith. Precisely for this reason the conversion

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[312] For *perfidia* as breach of faith and apostasy see Kahl, "Die ersten Jahrhunderte des missionsgeschichtlichen Mittelalters", *Die Kirche des früheren Mittelalters*, Munich 1978, 46. See also Lubac, *Exégèse Médiévale*, Paris 1959/64, I/2, 164f.: "On peut donc être depuis toujours dans l'*infidelitas*, mais on tombe dans la *perfidia*." Lubac refers to Greg. Mag. *moral.* XX, 22, 48 (CCL 143 A, 1039): *Iudaicus vero populus ad perfidiam declinavit.* Like *conversio* also *perfidia* (in the sense of *perversio*; cf. Greg. Mag. *in Ez.* I *hom.* VII, 15 [CCL 142, 92]: … *ad perversitatem trahantur perfidiae*) is basically a process, not a stable situation.

[313] Cassiod. *in Ps.* 140, 6 (CCL 98, 1266): … *haereticorum videtur designare perfidiam.*

[314] Peterson, "Perfidia Judaica", *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 50 (1936), 308f.

[315] Vernet, "Juifs (Controverses avec les)", *DThC* 8/2 (1925), 1886.

[316] … *ut fidei disciplinam percipiant* (*fid. cath.* II, 1, 12; PL 83, 502). Right at the beginning of the *Etymologies* (I, 1, 3) he defines the term, following Cassiod. *inst.* II, 3, 22 (Mynors, 130). The gospel is *disciplina* for the period until the end of the world (*etym.* VIII, 3, 3). For the close association of *fides* and *disciplina* see Tert. *apol.* 23, 11 (CCL 1, 132) and *praescr. haer.* 19, 3 (CCL 1, 201). In several places *disciplina* is compared to tradition; cf. Cypr. *testim.* III, 68 (CCL 3, 157: parallel use of the phrases *contra disciplinam* and *non secundum traditionem*). Object of Christian *fides* is therefore ecclesiastical tradition. For the use in patristic literature see Marrou, "*Doctrina* et *disciplina* dans la langue des Pères de l'Église", *Archivum Latinitatis Medii Aevi (Bulletin du Cange)* 9 (1934), 5–25.

[317] *fid. cath.* II, 1, 5 (PL 83, 500).

of the Goths at the 3rd council of Toledo had an innovative, "etymo-
logical" function in Isidore's eyes;[318] his view of history and politics was
insolubly linked with his concept of Catholic faith encompassing all
gentile nations in the whole world.

2.3.2. *Sacraments*

The preaching of the gospel is hardly touched upon in *de fide catholica*,
but the sacraments of Christian faith are discussed in the second book.
In his entire œuvre Isidore uses the term *sacramentum* in three differ-
ent meanings. First it denotes aspects of divine revelation such as the
Bible, the spiritual sense of scripture or the gist of Christian faith and
ecclesiastical teaching.[319] The second level refers to signs used in church
practice that communicate salvation; in *de fide catholica* Isidore explicitly
mentions baptism and the eucharist.[320] In the *Etymologies* there is also
a third level, referring to the secular meaning ("obligation"; "oath of
allegiance"); however, the military aspect recedes into the background,
as the general character of "promise" receives greater weight.[321] The

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[318] See *infra*, p. 275.

[319] *fid. cath*. II, 20, 2 (PL 83, 528) he summarizes the mystical (allegorical) and the
moral (tropological) sense of scripture under the label *secundum sacramentorum intelligen-
tiam*. See also *quaest. in Gen. praef*. 2 (PL 83, 207). In the *praefatio* to the *prooemia* he refers
to the Old and New Testament: … *e quibus cuncta sacramentorum mysteria revelantur* (*praef*.
14; PL 83, 160). *eccl. off*. II, 22, 2 (CCL 113, 97) *sacramenta* are used as a synonym for the
Christian creed; see also ibid., 23, 5 (CCL 113, 99). Isidore calls the dogma of the Trin-
ity a *mysterium*, but also a *sacramentum* (*fid. cath*. I, 4, 5f.; PL 83, 458); already Jerome had
practically used both terms synonymously; cf. Fontaine, "Isidore de Séville pédagogue
et théoricien de l'exégèse", *Stimuli. Exegese und ihre Hermeneutik in Antike und Christentum*,
Münster 1996, 428 note 26. The incarnation is a *sacramentum*, too (*fid. cath*. I, 10, 1;
PL 83, 468). For the spiritual sense of scripture as *sacramentum* cf. Tert. *adv. Marc*. V, 4, 8
(Evans, 530). Augustine (*enarr. in Ps*. 103, 3, 1; CCL 40, 1499) talks about the *sacramenta
prophetica* of the psalms; cf. also *civ. Dei* IV, 33 (CCL 47, 126f.). This relationship between
the two testaments corresponds to Isidore's phrase *mysteriorum sacramenta* (*quaest. in Iud*. 1,
1; PL 83, 379).

[320] *fid. cath*. II, 24, 2 (PL 83, 530): *baptismi sacramentum*; chapter 27 of the second book
is entitled: *Quomodo sacramentum Eucharistie praefiguratum est* (PL 83, 535). The definition of
sacramentum in the *Etymologies* corresponds to the second level described above (*etym*. VI,
19, 38–42; for parallels in Augustine see Carpin, *Il battesimo in Isidoro di Siviglia*, Bologna
1984, 104–107). Characteristic elements of this definition are the semiotic aspect and the
Holy Spirit acting as medium of the salutary effects. For the semiotic aspect in Augus-
tine see *ep*. 138, 7 (PL 33, 527). For the role of the sacraments as a commemoration of
past events of salvation history see Isid. *quaest. in Gen*. 8, 5 (PL 83, 235).

[321] *etym*. V, 24, 31. For the meaning of "oath" see also *sent*. II, 31, 4 (CCL 111, 155); *c*. 7
of the council of Lérida 546 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica IV, 303);

obligation to keep a promise establishes a link to Isidore's concept of *fides*.[322]

Some patristic authors had equated *fides* and baptism;[323] this has some bearing on an analysis of Isidore's title *de fide catholica*. The said equation is also hinted at by Isidore when he describes the distribution of salt among those who are about to be baptized in his treatise *de ecclesiasticis officiis*.[324] Augustine's view, according to which already baptism and not faith constitutes a "believer", was to be very influential in the middle ages; yet he had expressly limited this statement to children.[325] Isidore's understanding of baptism is mainly conditioned by Augustinian teaching, especially regarding the necessity of infant baptism, the faith of adults as a preliminary substitute for the faith of children, and Christ as the real administrator of the sacrament. This led to the view that baptism was not to be reiterated because of the *character indelebilis* of the sacrament; not even baptism received from the hands of heretics was to be repeated, even though its beneficial consequences were thought not to become effective outside the Catholic church.[326]

In *de fide catholica* Isidore discusses Old Testament types of baptism, such as the crossing of the river Jordan by the Israelites under the leadership of Joshua, the type of Jesus,[327] the crossing of the Red Sea,[328] or circumcision,[329] but he also treats its effects, i.e. sanctification, communion with Christ and expulsion of evil. For his argument against the Jews it is significant that elsewhere he declares that baptism constitutes

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I Seville *c.* 3 from 590 (Vives, *Concilios visigóticos e hispano-romanos*, Barcelona/Madrid 1963, 153) and the important *c.* 75 of IV Toledo from 633 : … *fidem sacramento promissam regibus suis* (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 248); ibid., 252: *sacramentum fidei*.

[322] *syn*. II, 57–58 (PL 83, 858).

[323] Tert. *pudic*. XVIII, 15 (SC 394, 250) and *adv. Marc*. I, 28, 2 (Evans, 78).

[324] *eccl. off*. II, 21, 4 (CCL 113, 96); see also *all*. 75 (PL 83, 111): *post fidem*. However, elsewhere he describes baptism not as a synonym but as a precondition of faith: … *multos per baptismum ad fidem transire* (*quaest. in Num*. 42, 9; PL 83, 358).

[325] *ep*. 98, 9–10 (CSEL 34/2, 531f.).

[326] Carpin, *Il battesimo in Isidoro di Siviglia*, Bologna 1984, 186.

[327] This interpretation was mainly established by Origen; cf. ibid. 185.

[328] See also IV Toledo *c.* 6 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 193) and *quaest. in Ex*. 19, 1 (PL 83, 296). The source is August. *c. Faust*. 12, 29 (CSEL 25/1, 357).

[329] *fid. cath*. II, 16, 6 (PL 83, 526). For the circumcision of the heart see also *fid. cath*. II, 16, 3 (PL 83, 525).

the basis for the spiritual understanding of scripture.[330] Again the conflict between church and synagogue is conceptualized as a hermeneutical controversy, which can, however, not be resolved by rational means, but only with recourse to Christian sacraments.

Not only *fides* is conceived of as a pact; also baptism is a covenant, a testament established between God and man.[331] It is noteworthy that baptism (and one might add: not instruction) is presented as the way to achieve faith, even if it has to be admitted that Isidore is guided by the wording of his prooftexts from the Old Testament.[332] In order to understand his position concerning the proper way to become a Christian, it is essential to look at his notion of conversion, especially in relation to the preparation for baptism and appropriate instruction.

2.3.3. *Conversion*

Catechetical instruction and an institution referred to as "catechumenate" in modern times underwent considerable modifications during the first Christian centuries; they were also markedly different from one region to another.[333] Justin Martyr required newly converted Christians to be convinced of the truth of Christian doctrine.[334] For some time a preparatory period of three years was deemed appropriate, attested for the first time in the 3rd century in the Apostolic Tradition, which pays

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[330] *all.* 235 (PL 83, 128).

[331] *fid. cath.* II, 24, 12 (PL 83, 533).

[332] *Fidem, iam non per prisca signacula carnis, et iniuriam corporis, sed per novam gratiam lavacri spiritualis adipiscendam* (*fid. cath.* II, 16, 4; PL 83, 525). For the position of the early church cf. Horn, "Der Verzicht auf die Beschneidung im frühen Christentum", *NTSt* 42 (1996), 479–505.

[333] Brakmann/Drews/Metzger, "Katechumenat", *RAC* 20 (2004), 497–574, for regional differences esp. 519; Pasquato/Brakmann, "Katechese", ibid. 422–496. For the history of baptism in the early church see Finn, *Early Christian Baptism and the Catechumenate: Italy, North Africa and Egypt*, Collegeville 1992 and id., *From Death to Rebirth: Ritual and Conversion in Antiquity*, New York 1997. For conversion cf. Fink-Dendorfer, *Conversio. Motive und Motivierung zur Bekehrung in der Alten Kirche*, Frankfurt/M. 1986.

[334] *apol.* I, 61, 2 (Munier, 112). The aspect of personal conviction is also stressed by Ignatius of Antioch, *ad Rom.* 3, 2 (SC 10, 128). For baptism and instruction cf. Kreider, "Baptism, Catechism, and the Eclipse of Jesus' Teaching in Early Christianity", *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 72 (1998), 5–30 and Bradshaw, "The Gospel and the Catechumenate in the Third Century", *JThS* 50 (1999), 143–152.

special attention to ethical conduct.[335] The sincerity of the intention of an applicant had to be guaranteed by a sponsor.[336]

An important element of preparation was the "hearing of the word", which corresponded to the New Testament concept of *fides ex auditu* (Rom. 10, 17); faith was thought to be the answer to preaching (*fides quae praedicatur*).[337] Another essential factor were scrutinies conducted at several stages of the preparatory period; these were meant to investigate intentions, faith and behaviour of the applicants. In the time immediately before baptism *sermones ad competentes* were held to finalize instruction. According to the 4th-century pilgrim Egeria, the longer prebaptismal preparation was followed in Jerusalem by a shorter postbaptismal instruction, during which the newly baptized were initiated into the secret mysteries of faith during mystagogical catecheses.[338] Also in western churches there was postbaptismal instruction,[339] which can be regarded as an origin of the later practice to concentrate on teaching after baptism. However, the earlier practice focusing on prebaptismal instruction is still visible in the Apostolic Constitutions compiled from earlier sources around 380.[340]

Augustine's treatise *de catechizandis rudibus* is the only one written for applicants who have just registered for baptismal preparation.[341] He composed the work at the suggestion of the deacon Deogratias,

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[335] *trad. apost.* 17 (FC 1, 250). The importance of behaviour is stressed by the fact that the chapter on people applying for baptism starts with just this criterion (*trad. apost.* 20; FC 1, 252). An examination of behaviour and ethical life of the applicants is still required in the Apostolic Constitutions compiled around 380 (*const. apost.* VIII, 32, 2; SC 336, 236). Other requirements of the Apostolic Tradition such as the duration of three years and the possibility to shorten the preparatory period in case of eagerness, good intention and appropriate behaviour are taken up in the Apostolic Constitutions, too; cf. *const. apost.* VIII, 32, 16 (SC 336, 238–240).

[336] *const. apost.* VIII, 32, 2 (SC 336, 236).

[337] Augustine describes the instruction of catechumens as follows: … *quidquid narras ita narra, ut ille cui loqueris audiendo credat, credendo speret, sperando amat* (*cat. rud.* IV, 8; CCL 46, 129). For the notion of *fides ex auditu* cf. *trin.* XIII, 2, 5 (CCL 50 A, 385): *Fides … quamvis ex auditu in nobis facta sit*. It should be noted that Jerome distinguishes sharply between observation of Old Testament commandments and "hearing of faith" (*in Gal.* I, 3; PL 26, 348).

[338] Leclercq, "Catéchèse-catéchisme-catéchumène", *DACL* 2/2 (1910), 2564f.; Pasquato/Brakmann, "Katechese", *RAC* 20 (2004), 422–496.

[339] Ambrose of Milan hinted at aspects connected with the so-called arcane discipline (*de mysteriis* I, 2; CSEL 73, 89). See Jacob, *"Arkandisziplin", Allegorese, Mystagogie: ein neuer Zugang zur Theologie des Ambrosius von Mailand*, Frankfurt/M. 1990.

[340] *const. apost.* VII, 39, 1–5 (SC 336, 92–96).

[341] CCL 46 (121–178). For the instruction of catechumens see also his—perhaps pseudepigraphical—sermon *de symbolo ad catechumenos* (CCL 46, 185–199).

who was entrusted with instructing the catechumens at Carthage. Similar works by other authors are always directed at people who have already made some progress in Christian life and faith.[342] Augustine quotes Paul's formula of the *fides ex auditu* (Rom. 10, 17) in his letter to bishop Asellicus, where he discusses theological controversies with Jews.[343] In his treatise for catechumens he insists that motives and intentions of applicants have to be ascertained;[344] if they do not correct their behaviour, they cannot be admitted to the sacraments. This is an indication that Augustine still considered baptism to be the culmination of the conversion process.[345]

The significant increase in the number of baptisms in the 4th century entailed changes in its administration. Augustine complained that many Christians came to church only *corporaliter*; they had to be admonished to change their lives, i.e. to convert properly.[346] The preparatory period was consequently divided into an initial longer one for catechumens and a shorter one of about six weeks for *competentes*, reserved for theological instruction proper. The growing practice of infant baptism also led to important changes.[347] On the Iberian peninsula infant baptism became general practice only from the middle of the 6th century onwards,[348] but already at the end of the 4th century Pope Siricius had insisted on the necessity of infant baptism in case of danger in his letter to Himerius of Tarragona.[349] At the beginning of that century the coun-

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[342] Mayer, "De cathecizandis rudibus", *Augustinus-Lexikon* 1 (1994), 796.

[343] *ep.* 196, 6 (CSEL 57, 220). Isidore quotes this passage—without reference to Jews—*dif.* II, 32, 121 (PL 83, 89).

[344] *cat. rud.* VIII, 12 (CCL 46, 133). Cf. also *fid. oper.* IX, 14 (CSEL 41, 51). For Augustine's position see Harmless, *Augustine and the Catechumenate*, Collegeville 1995; Pérez Velázquez, "Aplicaciones catequéticas del *De doctrina christiana*", *Augustinus* 42 (1997), 353–390 and Rebillard, "La figure du catéchumène et le problème du délai du baptême dans la pastorale d'Augustin", *Augustin prédicateur (395–411)*, Paris 1998, 285–292.

[345] Kahl, "Die ersten Jahrhunderte des missionsgeschichtlichen Mittelalters", *Die Kirche des früheren Mittelalters*, Munich 1978, 71.

[346] August. *cat. rud.* VII, 11 (CCL 46, 132). For complaints of Greek church fathers about nominal Christians cf. Van Engen, "Christening the Romans", *Traditio* 52 (1997), 12 ff.

[347] Fisher, *Christian Initiation: Baptism in the Medieval West*, London 1965. Augustine already mentions the possibility of infant baptism, cf. *ep.* 98, 5–6 (CSEL 34/2, 526 ff.) and his treatise *de peccatorum meritis et remissione et de baptismo parvulorum* (CSEL 60, 1–151). Gregory of Nazianz restricts infant baptism to cases where the children are capable to realize what they are receiving; cf. *oratio* 40, 28 (SC 358, 262).

[348] Hormaeche Basauri, *La pastoral de la iniciación cristiana en la España visigoda*, Toledo 1983, 48.

[349] *ep.* I, 2, 3 (PL 13, 1135).

cil of Elvira had decided that preparation for baptism should last at least two years.[350] In special cases the duration could be even longer, e.g. for pagan priests or persons who had committed moral sins.[351] While Siricius had fixed the minimum duration at 40 days,[352] the 2nd council of Braga (572) lowered it to merely 20 days, opposing a still further shortening to two weeks.[353] Neither Isidore of Seville nor Ildefonse of Toledo make any comments concerning the duration of the catechumenate in the 7th century; they merely state that the period of the *competentes* starts with the *traditio symboli*, which may be an indication that the preparatory period had been shortened, being restricted to the second phase of the two stages that had been established during the 4th century.[354]

As a result of the disintegration of the practice that had become prevalent in late antiquity, baptismal preparation and instruction were left to parents and sponsors. Ecclesiastical *catechesis* was limited to certain ritual elements that had accompanied the former preparatory period. Baptismal instruction was no longer addressed to those about to be baptized, but to their godparents, who were now in charge of postbaptismal *catechesis*.[355] Church schools were mainly maintained for clerics, leaving the sermon as the principal medium for the instruction of the laity.[356] This tendency is also reflected in a change that occurred in the meaning of the term *catechizare*, which lost its primary significance "to instruct", being referred more and more to the performance of certain rites, namely exorcisms.[357] A similar development occurred in the interpretation of the scrutinies, which became assimilated to exor-

[350] *c.* 42 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica IV, 255). See Pijuan, *La liturgía bautismal en la España romano-visigoda*, Toledo 1981, 52 ff.

[351] Ramos Lissón, in id. and Orlandis, *Die Synoden auf der Iberischen Halbinsel bis zum Einbruch des Islam*, Paderborn *et al.* 1981, 10.

[352] *ep.* I, 2, 3 (PL 13, 1135).

[353] *cc.* 1 and 49 (Vives, *Concilios visigóticos e hispano-romanos*, Barcelona/Madrid 1963, 81. 99).

[354] *eccl. off.* II, 22, 2 (CCL 113, 97); *cogn. bapt.* 30. 34 (Campos Ruiz, 268. 274).

[355] In the Carolingian period godparents were required to know the creed and the Lord's Prayer, which they had to teach to their godchildren; cf. Van Engen, "Faith as a Concept of Order in Medieval Christendom", *Belief in History: Innovative Approaches to European and American Religion*, Notre Dame/London 1991, 24 and 37f. In the missionary treatise ascribed to Pirmin of Reichenau godparents are told to provide for a proper instruction of their godchildren (*Scarapsus* 32; Engelmann, 94).

[356] Riché, "L'enseignement et la culture des laïcs dans l'occident pré-carolingien", *La scuola nell'occidente latino dell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 19 (1972), 246–248.

[357] This development can already be detected in Roman liturgy at the end of the 5th century, as indicated by John the Deacon; cf. Fisher, *Christian Initiation: Baptism in the Medieval West*, London 1965, 7.

cisms. The investigation was no longer directed at life and faith of those applying for baptism; the scrutinies were rather seen as rites aiming to ascertain whether the demons had already left the applicants.[358] In the early middle ages preparation for baptism was mainly limited to rituals that had accompanied the catechumenate in late antiquity.[359] The bishops of the still independent kingdom of the Suebi in Galicia tried to revive the practice of the catechumenate in 572 at the 2nd council of Braga.[360] For some reason the awareness of the importance of conversion and baptismal preparation seems to have been higher in that kingdom than elsewhere; it is noteworthy that Martin of Braga composed his treatise *de correctione rusticorum*, unparalleled on Spanish soil, in precisely that region and period.

The growing practice of infant baptism could give the impression that it was possible to instill faith in passive recipients. Initially the sponsors were required to recite a *professio* in the name of the child, but later it was generally accepted that it was the church who made that profession on behalf of the baptized person.[361] In accordance with the belief that the faith of the church could never fail, it was assumed that laypeople were only required to have *fides implicita*, i.e. the intention to faithfully believe everything taught by the church. This concept is ascribed to the Gothic elite at the 3rd council of Toledo.[362] Faith became a synonym for obedience to the church, baptism being the decisive act of subordination. Augustine may have been the first to regard baptism as a legal symbol, interpreting it as a sign indicating subordination to the disciplinary authority of the church.[363]

The notion of *fides implicita* provided the basis for extending Augustine's position on infants to adult laypeople.[364] It was only in the medie-

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[358] See already Leo Magn. *ep.* 16, 6 (PL 54, 702): *exorcismis scrutandi*.

[359] Fisher, *Christian Initiation: Baptism in the Medieval West*, London 1965, 28. The rites accompanying the catechumenate started to be amalgamated with baptism proper; cf. Angenendt, *Das Frühmittelalter*, Stuttgart *et al.* ²1995, 330.

[360] *c.* 1 (Vives, *Concilios visigóticos e hispano-romanos*, Barcelona/Madrid 1963, 81).

[361] Elukin, "From Jew to Christian? Conversion and Immutability in Medieval Europe", *Varieties of Religious Conversion in the Middle Ages*, Gainesville *et al.* 1997, 179. Both interpretations are already present in Augustine; cf. Bonner, "Baptismus paruulorum", *Augustinus-Lexikon* 1 (1994), 598.

[362] *Omne quod nobis verius fraternitas vestra patefecerit, teneamus et liberali fateamur confessione* (*Gothorum professio fidei*; Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 78).

[363] Kahl, "Die ersten Jahrhunderte des missionsgeschichtlichen Mittelalters", *Die Kirche des früheren Mittelalters*, Munich 1978, 53.

[364] August. *ep.* 98, 10 (CSEL 34/2, 532).

val period that this doctrine was formulated explicitly. Isidore's position is contradictory; on the one hand he compares ignorance and lack of understanding to blindness, which is stigmatized repeatedly,[365] but on the other hand he shows positive appreciation of lack of knowledge, which seems to be an anticipation of the concept of *fides implicita*.[366] The development of this doctrine was stimulated by early medieval missionary practices that relied on the immediate salutary effectiveness of the sacraments.[367] This had momentous consequences for the notion of conversion, which was no longer seen as the "reorientation of the soul of an individual"[368] as in classical philosophy or early Christianity, when it referred to a fundamental change of life and internal attitudes (*metanoia*);[369] it was now interpreted as a mere passive agreement with Christian dogma as defined by the church.

In the early middle ages conversion was conceived of as a corporate act. During the missionary activities among Barbarian peoples, preparation for baptism was either given up completely or retained in a very rudimentary form only.[370] Christian instruction was no longer given during the catechumenate, but continuously after baptism, mainly by means of sermons. This entailed a change in the notion of conver-

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[365] E.g. *all.* 145 (PL 83, 118).

[366] *quaest. in Gen.* 2, 12 (PL 83, 215). See also *quaest. in Ex.* 56, 7 (PL 83, 317).

[367] Kahl, "Die ersten Jahrhunderte des missionsgeschichtlichen Mittelalters", *Die Kirche des früheren Mittelalters*, Munich 1978, 50; Hauschildt, "Katechumenat/Katechumenen II", *TRE* 18 (1989), 6. These notions influenced missionary practices especially with regard to the christianization of the Saxons. Alcuin insisted on a reform of these violent practices, referring to Augustine's *de catechizandis rudibus*; cf. Angenendt, *Das Frühmittelalter*, Stuttgart *et al.* ²1995, 426.

[368] Nock, *Conversion: The Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo*, Oxford 1933, 7. Nock repeatedly stresses the aspect of personal choice, which has necessarily to be made voluntarily: "… deliberate turning from indifference or from an earlier form of piety to another, a turning which implies a consciousness that a great change is involved." (Ibid.). Characteristic of this ancient form of conversion was the "adhesion of the will to a theology" (ibid., 14). See Fabre, "Conversions religieuses: Histoires et récits", *Annales* 54 (1999), 805–812.

[369] Rom. 12, 2; Clem. Alex. *strom.* II, 11, 2 (GCS Clem. Alex. 2, 118, 31); *Pastor Hermae* 31, 1 f. 6; 62, 3 (SC 53, 158. 160. 244).

[370] Frank/Grünbeck, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Alten Kirche*, Paderborn *et al.* 1996, 335; Muldoon, "Introduction: The Conversion of Europe", *Varieties of Religious Conversion in the Middle Ages*, Gainesville *et al.* 1997, 2: "A bishop, Remigius, provides instruction in Christian doctrine and then baptizes the king and his soldiers. … In fact, this kind of corporate or communal conversion is the way in which most European peoples were introduced to Christianity." See also v. Padberg, *Mission und Christianisierung. Formen und Folgen bei Angelsachsen und Franken im 7. und 8. Jahrhundert*, Stuttgart 1995 and id., *Die Christianisierung Europas im Mittelalter*, Stuttgart 1998.

sion; it was the "ideological standpoint" of the "object" of missionary acitivities that had to be changed and overcome rather than ethical values and convictions. Baptism was considered to be not the end, but the beginning of the process that had been regarded as Christian conversion in antiquity.[371] Christian mission in the early middle ages often rested on sermons preached in front of representatives of the elite, whose members were expected to influence other sections of the population in turn; a case in point is Augustine of Canterbury during his mission in Kent.

Consequently, conversion was no longer directed at the individual, as in pagan philosophy or early Christianity, but at the social community. The decisive step was not any longer internal reorientation (*metanoia*), but the acceptance of ethical or dogmatic norms and values defined by the church.[372] As a result the intentions and inner motives of the individual could appear to be of secondary importance; far more significance was attached to the ritual performance of "conversion" in the relevant social group, which afterwards was commissioned with ensuring Christian education and instruction of its members. In Isidore there are some indications that shed some light on this development: *Prius docendi sunt seniores plebis, ut per eos infra positi facilius doceantur.*[373] The act of accepting faith acquired greater significance than preparation for the sacrament of baptism.[374]

The conversion of the Goths to Catholicism in 589 can be put into this context. After Reccared had personally converted in 587, he assembled a synod of Arian bishops in order to prepare the conversion of the entire people. Within two years he managed to convince the majority or at least the elite, although there were four unsuccessful rebellions against the king.[375] Afterwards, Reccared extolled the conversion of the

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[371] Kahl, "Die ersten Jahrhunderte des missionsgeschichtlichen Mittelalters", *Die Kirche des früheren Mittelalters*, Munich 1978, 44; Löwe, "Pirmin, Willibrord und Bonifatius. Ihre Bedeutung für die Missionsgeschichte ihrer Zeit", ibid. 222.

[372] Russell, *The Germanization of Early Medieval Christianity*, New York/Oxford 1994, 28: "Standards of societal conversion often consist of the number and social status of those persons who are baptized, and the degree to which they accept ecclesiastical custom and discipline."

[373] *sent.* III, 43, 7 (CLL 111, 287).

[374] Cf. Isidore's interpretation of the first day of creation: *quia prima est in conversione fides* (*quaest. in Gen.* 1, 4; PL 83, 209 f.).

[375] Joh. Biclar. *chron. ad a.* 588, 1 (Campos, 96; *chron.* 88: Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 73); *VPE* V, 11 (CCL 116, 85–88; Fear, *Lives of the Visigothic Fathers*, 95–98). In the shorter version of his *History of the Goths* (*hist.* 55; Rodríguez Alonso,

Goths as his personal success,[376] he expressly ascribed the initiative to himself.[377] The king distinguishes between two stages: significantly the conversion to the Catholic church happens first, the instruction in the new faith follows only later.[378] Nonetheless those who have already converted but who have not yet received any instruction in the new faith are referred to as *ex haerese Arriana convers⟨i⟩*,[379] and the Goths declare to have converted with all their heart, mind and soul.[380]

The supreme importance of the act of accepting faith—as opposed to the slow process of being initiated into it or to everyday practice of it—is also apparent in the acts of the council of 589, where the queen corroborates the following with her signature: … *hanc fidem, quam credidi et suscepi, mea manu de toto corde subscripsi.*[381] The perfect form *credidi* refers to a single act of accepting faith in the past, it says nothing about the queen's present belief. The primary importance attached to the performative act and to its official, public declaration also emerges from the fact that the recently converted Goths, who have not yet been instructed in Catholic faith, are required to recite first of all the Catholic creed, which becomes a symbol of their enduring commitment.[382] *Fides* thus appears to be a legal obligation, a public profession ("a self-obligating through promise"[383]), rather than an attitude of mind and internal conviction. Later in the 7th century Ildefonse of Toledo clearly defines faith as an act of public profession.[384]

As indicated above, in the early middle ages baptism was regarded as the beginning of a transformation process, not as the end like in the early church. During the missionary campaigns among central and eastern European peoples "the goal of the missionary who baptized an entire people was to enable each individual eventually to become

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264 ff.) Isidore talks about *machinationes* of various conspirators, which should, however, not be dated to the beginning of Reccared's reign, if the wording is taken at face value.

[376] … *has nobilissimas gentes … quasi sanctum et placabile sacrificium per vestras manus aeterno Deo offero* (*Regis professio fidei*; Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 58).

[377] … *populum qui sub nomine religionis famulabatur errori, ad agnitionem fidei et ecclesiae catholicae consortium revocarem* (ibid., 57).

[378] *Sicut enim divino nutu nostrae curae fuit hos populos ad unitatem Christi ecclesiae pertrahere … ita sit vestrae docibilitatis catholicis eos dogmatibus instituere* (ibid., 59).

[379] *Gothorum professio fidei* (ibid., 75).

[380] *Gothorum professio fidei* (ibid., 83); cf. Orlandis, "Problemas canónicos en torno a la conversión de los visigodos al catolicismo", *AHDE* 32 (1962), 301–321, esp. 302f.

[381] Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 73.

[382] *Gothorum professio fidei* (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 76).

[383] TeSelle, "Credere", *Augustinus-Lexikon* 2 (1996), 120.

[384] *cogn. bapt.* 36 (Campos Ruiz, 275).

fully transformed in Christ".[385] This statement can also be applied to forced conversions of Jews, the difference being that in these cases the initiative often lay with high-ranking members of the laity. Irrespective of the "historical truth" behind the report about forced conversions decreed by the Merovingian Dagobert I at the instigation of the Byzantine emperor Heraclius, the redactor of the text clearly expresses the idea that baptism (and conversion) should be performed on the level of communities.[386] "With … the creation of an ideology of Christian kingship, conversion of the kingdom's enemies … became a responsibility of the Christian ruler."[387] These enemies could be external ones, such as the Saxons for Charlemagne before his conquest of their territory, but groups living within the boundaries of the political community could also be turned to enemy status if they failed to comply with the ideological concerns of the ruler or the elite.

With the gradual weakening of their status as Roman citizens and the development of an ideology of Christian kingship, Hispano-Roman Jews had increasingly found themselves to be the victims of attempts aimed at marginalizing them.[388] From an officially propagated perspective they appeared to be outsiders, if not enemies of Christian rulership. The use of violence in the missionary efforts among "Barbarians" and Jews was also due to the completely different understanding of conversion outlined above. "In many instances *conversio* must be identical with baptism or, in the case of the change from Arianism to Catholicism, with the anointing, without these acts of institutional incorporation necessarily being preceded by an inner conversion."[389] It is precisely this collective character of conversion that is a characteristic feature of early medieval Christianity,[390] the exception being individual monastic conversion. Those who were baptized were increasingly seen as passive recipients, the emphasis shifted to the words and actions of the priest administering the sacrament.[391]

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[385] Muldoon, "Introduction: The Conversion of Europe", *Varieties of Religious Conversion in the Middle Ages*, Gainesville *et al.* 1997, 4.

[386] Ps.-Fredegar, *chron.* IV, 65 (MGH, SRM, II, 153).

[387] Muldoon, "Introduction: The Conversion of Europe", *Varieties of Religious Conversion in the Middle Ages*, Gainesville *et al.* 1997, 5, referring to the violent conversion of the Saxons by Charlemagne.

[388] See *infra*, chapter 4.3.

[389] Nolte, "Gender and Conversion in the Merovingian Era", *Varieties of Religious Conversion in the Middle Ages*, Gainesville *et al.* 1997, 83.

[390] Ibid., 84. See also Schmitt, *La conversion d'Hermann le Juif*, Paris 2003, 182.

[391] Angenendt, *Das Frühmittelalter*, Stuttgart *et al.* ²1995, 330.

These different tendencies, which show the decreasing importance attached to the intentions of the individual, can contribute to an explanation why acts of forced baptism happened occasionally, although this was in sharp contradiction to the practice of the early church. This change may be regarded as one of the elements that mark off the middle ages from antiquity.[392] Missionary practice became formalized, externalized and despiritualized.[393] In addition, baptizing large numbers of people was often a matter of political interest, which contributed to a radical change in the external circumstances of conversion.[394] "Complete" internal conversion was relegated to a far future; it might even take several generations to achieve something remotely similar to standards that had been deemed essential prerequisites of conversion in antiquity.[395]

Growing belief in the immediate salutary effects of sacramental grace was reflected in decreasing attention given to preparation for baptism mediated by human beings. This could lead to a situation where the act of baptism was conceived of as paving the way for God's direct intervention in the conversion of the new Christian; the church could seem to be left merely with the task to give some minor postbaptismal support. By contrast, in the early church great importance had been attached to an initiation into the Christian way of life, into the norms and values of Christian ethics. Forced baptism can thus be interpreted as another fundamental change that occurred in Christian society at the beginning of the middle ages.

The regulations of the council of Agde (506) imposed an especially long catechumenate of eight months on Jewish applicants for baptism.[396] The reason given was their allegedly strong inclination to apos-

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[392] The authority of superiors over individuals in religious matters also emerges from the practice of child oblation, which was declared to be irrevocable at the 4th council of Toledo (c. 49; Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 229f.): *Monachum aut paterna devotio aut propria professio facit.* Cf. Orlandis, "La oblación de niños a los monasterios en la España visigótica", *Yermo* 1 (1963), 33–47 and de Jong, *In Samuel's Image. Child Oblation in the Early Medieval West*, Leiden *et al.* 1996.

[393] Kahl, "Die ersten Jahrhunderte des missionsgeschichtlichen Mittelalters", *Die Kirche des früheren Mittelalters*, Munich 1978, 45. For certain "archaic" aspects of early medieval religiosity see Angenendt, *Geschichte der Religiosität im Mittelalter*, Darmstadt 1997, 23.

[394] For the involvement of political authorities cf. Holl, "Die Missionsmethode der alten und die der mittelalterlichen Kirche", *Kirchengeschichte als Missionsgeschichte, I*, Munich 1974, 3–17, esp. 12f.

[395] Kahl, "Die ersten Jahrhunderte des missionsgeschichtlichen Mittelalters", *Die Kirche des früheren Mittelalters*, Munich 1978, 52.

[396] *c.* 34 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica IV, 135).

tasy.[397] This prolonged preparatory period may actually have been introduced to prevent zealous clerics from starting campaigns for a hasty conversion of Jews.[398] By contrast, Gregory the Great suspended the usual practice by allowing the Jews of Agrigent to be baptized before Easter on any Sunday or feast day, if they had prepared for baptism during a period of 40 days.[399] On the one hand this shows a weakening of ancient ecclesiastical practice, but on the other hand it is a clear indication that a proper preparatory period was still deemed essential, whose duration corresponded exactly to the second stage of the catechumenate, the time of the *competentes*. But in cases of forced baptism this period was shortened to a few days or hours, as shown in the letter by Severus of Minorca.[400] In 681 the Visigothic King Ervig decreed the baptism of all remaining Jews within one year; to those who complied with this injunction within 60 days he granted the privilege to retain their Christian slaves.[401] This policy was driven by an intention completely opposed to the pastoral one prevalent in the early church as regards preparation for baptism; absolute primacy was now given to the political interest in achieving total religious unity as quickly as possible.

In Isidore's systematic account of baptism the practice of earlier centuries is still visible. In the *Etymologies* he defines a *catechumenus* as someone still hearing the faith, which is in accordance with the Pauline notion of the *fides ex auditu*.[402] The grace of God can be achieved only after instruction through baptism.[403] In an allegorical exposition Isidore expressly stresses the successive stages leading up to baptism; faith is presented as the basis and precondition for baptism, which is in turn followed by the eucharist.[404] However, elsewhere he gives the opposite impression: through baptism the spiritual circumcision is performed *per fidem*, and the newly baptized will believe only after they have recited

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[397] *Iudaei, quorum perfidia frequenter ad vomitum redit* (ibid.); cf. 2 Pt. 2, 22.

[398] Schreckenberg, *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos-Texte und ihr literarisches und historisches Umfeld (1.-11. Jh.)*, Frankfurt/M. and Bern 1982, 392.

[399] *ep.* VIII, 23 (CCL 140 A, 543).

[400] Bradbury, *Severus of Minorca: Letter on the Conversion of the Jews*, Oxford 1996, 70.

[401] *LV* XII, 3, 13 (MGH, LL, I, 1, 440).

[402] *etym.* VII, 14, 7. For ritual aspects cf. *eccl. off.* II, 21, 2 (CCL 113, 96).

[403] *Post instructionem fidei conpetit gratiam Christi* (*etym.* VII, 14, 8). For the interrelationship of instruction and faith cf. also Clem. Alex. *paed.* I, 6, 30, 2 (GCS Clem. Alex. 1, 108): Instruction leads towards baptism, and it is continued in and after baptism by the Holy Spirit.

[404] *quaest. in Num.* 15, 25 (PL 83, 349).

the creed.[405] In this case, *fides* signifies baptism, which is presented as a precondition of faith.

In his systematic exposition of the sacraments in the treatise *de ecclesiasticis officiis* Isidore mentiones three stages that bring applicants closer to *fides*: *Primus gradus est caticuminorum, secundus conpetentium, tertius baptizatorum*.[406] The decisive step between the first two stages is the *traditio symboli*.[407] It is striking that he only mentions pagan applicants for baptism;[408] remarkably enough he never mentions Jewish catechumens. He may subsume the latter under the label of pagans, even though the polemical use of this word for Jews would be unusual in a systematic exposition.[409]

The information given by Isidore is probably derived from earlier tradition, reflecting practices of previous centuries rather than contemporary usage.[410] Even though infant baptism had become prevalent by the 7th century, Visigothic authors still repeated ancient traditions that had been developed for the baptismal preparation of adults.[411] The existence of the catechumenate on Spanish soil is attested by the council of Elvira at the beginning of the 4th century and still in the 6th by the council of Valencia (546), which confirmed the right of catechumens to be present during the reading of the gospel and at the ser-

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[405] *quaest. in Jos.* 6, 3f. (PL 83, 373).

[406] *eccl. off.* II, 21, 1 (CCL 113, 95). Three steps are already attested by the canons of the council of Elvira (*cc.* 4, 7, 9, 10); a similar notion can be found in Gregory of Elvira (*caticumini, competentes* and *fideles*: *tract. orig.* XII, 22; CCL 69, 95). According to Carpin this subdivision in three steps goes back to Ps.-Jerome, *de septem ordinibus Ecclesiae* (PL 30, 160); cf. Carpin, *Il battesimo in Isidoro di Siviglia*, Bologna 1984, 40f. For the subdivision of applicants in the Greek church cf. *const. apost.* VIII, 6, 2; VIII, 8, 1–6 (SC 336, 150. 160): The first group is referred to as those who hear, the second as those who have to be illuminated. The first level refers, as does Isidore's definition of *catechumenus*, to the notion of *fides ex auditu*.

[407] *eccl. off.* II, 22, 2 (CCL 113, 97).

[408] *Caticumini sunt qui primum de gentilitate veniunt* (*eccl. off.* II, 21, 1; CCL 113, 95).

[409] In the acts attributed to the 3rd council of Seville, meeting under Isidore's presidency, which stand out for anti-Jewish polemics, the hostile attitude culminates in their being labelled as pagans: … *perfidiae fraude … natos suos paganos retinent* (*Ex concilio spalitano*, X; Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 482). See Drews, "Jews as Pagans? Polemical Definitions of Identity in Visigothic Spain", *EME* 11 (2002), 189–207. For the Jews as *incredula gens*—which could entail their incorporation into the *gentilitas*—cf. Lubac, *Exégèse Médiévale*, Paris 1959/64, I/2, 187.

[410] Carpin, *Il battesimo in Isidoro di Siviglia*, Bologna 1984, 20f. note 17 and Fisher, *Christian Initiation: Baptism in the Medieval West*, London 1965, 89.

[411] Krinke, "Der spanische Taufritus im frühen Mittelalter", *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kulturgeschichte Spaniens*, Münster 1954, 44f.

mon.[412] Despite the practice of infant baptism, Isidore still states that catechumens shall not only receive instruction in faith; they should also prove to be good Christians in everyday life.[413]

The source for his description of what happens during the period of the *competentes* has not been identified;[414] in spite of that it is improbable that he understands *catecizare* as referring to detailed baptismal instruction, which could only have been given during a few days of Holy Week. It is safe to assume that he rather refers to rites that had been associated with the catechumenate for centuries. He does not have adults in mind because he states that sponsors (*gestantes*) recite the profession of faith on behalf of the child.[415] In no passage of his entire œuvre does Isidore present baptismal instruction and the preparation of people applying for baptism as a pastoral concern of the church, nowhere outside the *Etymologies* does he mention the ancient tradition that faith is brought about by hearing the word. His interest is limited to canonical and ritual aspects of the catechumenate.[416]

The statements made by Ildefonse of Toledo concerning baptism are likewise rooted in ancient ecclesiastical practice. They should not be interpreted as indications of contemporary usage,[417] even though he does mention infant baptism.[418] Many Spanish rites attested by Ildefonse came into being long before the 7th century, they are hardly appropriate for infant baptism.[419] It is remarkable that he joins Isidore

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[412] Conc. Illib. *cc*. 38 and 42 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica IV, 254 f.); Conc. Valenc. *c*. 1 (ibid., 314).

[413] *eccl. off.* II, 22, 1 (CCL 113, 97).

[414] *eccl. off.* II, 22, 2 (CCL 113, 97).

[415] *eccl. off.* II, 21, 3; II, 25, 7 (CCL 113, 96. 105); the source is Augustine's *de nuptiis et concupiscentiis* I, 20, 22 (CSEL 42, 235); cf. also August. *ep.* 217, 16 (CSEL 57, 415). For the systematic background cf. Bonner, "Baptismus paruulorum", *Augustinus-Lexikon* 1 (1994), 592–602. For the role of the sponsors according to Ildefonse cf. *cogn. bapt.* 34 (Campos Ruiz, 274).

[416] Cf. *eccl. off.* II, 13, 4 (CCL 113, 73), where he explains that exorcists have the right to lay their hands on catechumens.

[417] *cogn. bapt. praef.* (Campos Ruiz, 238).

[418] *cogn. bapt.* 14. 20 (Campos Ruiz, 250. 258).

[419] Krinke, "Der spanische Taufritus im frühen Mittelalter", *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kulturgeschichte Spaniens*, Münster 1954, 111. "Es difícil saber en qué medida su testimonio recoge un uso bautismal existente en su iglesia, o bien el uso común en otras iglesias." (Borobio, "Iniciación cristiana en la Iglesia hispana de los siglos VI al X", *Salmanticensis* 42, 1995, 30 f. note 4). Borobio is justified in doubting the reflection of contemporary practice in Ildefonse: "La terminología no siempre corresponde con la realidad. … una situación en que se mantienen los términos, pero los sujetos no responden a lo que indican, … se conservan los ritos, pero no responden a la situación para la que fueron

in talking only of pagan applicants for baptism, who have to be instructed in faith.[420] The silence of both Isidore and Ildefonse regarding Jewish catechumens is telling in view of the Jewish policies of some Visigothic monarchs and councils. It could be argued that these authors do not discuss the contemporary situation at all, limiting their expositions to a summary of ancient practice; however, Isidore's hint at the sponsors carrying infants during baptism points into the opposite direction. The silence of Visigothic churchmen is an indication that they eschewed the canonical problem of Jewish Christians; they glossed over the difficulties resulting from forced baptisms, possibly relying on the pretence that Jews could be subsumed under the heading "pagans", even though members of the two groups would have required totally different instruction, if representatives of the church should in earnest have wanted to convince them of the truth of Christianity.[421]

In discussing baptismal preparation, Ildefonse attaches supreme importance to ritual, especially exorcisms. His views concerning the catechumens' hearing and possibly also understanding the faith are based on a notion of ritual mediation of the matter they are taught.[422] The very short time reserved for the *competentes*, which is less than a week (from Palm Sunday till the night of Easter) is filled with a very substantial educational programme; the applicants have to digest both the Apostolic Creed and the *regula fidei*.[423] In view of the very restricted time the author can only have envisaged the *fides implicita*. According to Ildefonse, the major part of Christian instruction is left to the postbap-

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creados; se conserva la estructura fundamental, pero ya no es más que un pálido reflejo de la estructura originaria" (ibid., 32). For a similar situation in the Carolingian empire cf. Van Engen, "Faith as a Concept of Order in Medieval Christendom", *Belief in History: Innovative Approaches to European and American Religion*, Notre Dame/London 1991, 23.

[420] *Cum ex conversatione gentili quisque nolens ad cognitionem et fidem Dei hortatur ut veniat …* (*cogn. bapt.* 17; Campos Ruiz, 253). The striking adverbial *nolens* contradicts Isidore's definition *eccl. off.* II, 21, 1 (CCL 113, 95 f.): *Caticumini … habentes voluntatem credendi in Christo*. Afterwards Ildefonse discusses those who *de gentili conversatione … maiuscula aetate venientes* **volunt** *credere in Deum* (*cogn. bapt.* 20; Campos Ruiz, 258; my emphasis). For "pagans" applying for baptism see also *cogn. bapt.* 29 (Campos Ruiz, 267): *… convertenti ex errore gentili*. This repeated reference to pagans is an indication that Ildefonse depends on texts composed in earlier centuries; cf. González Salinero, *Las conversiones forzosas de los judíos en el reino visigodo*, Rome 2000, 125.

[421] For Ildefonse's "otherworldliness" cf. Adams, "The Political Grammar of Ildephonsus of Toledo: A Preliminary Report", *The Visigoths. Studies in Culture and Society*, Leiden *et al.* 1999, 162. Ildefonse generally avoids any reference to his own times.

[422] *cogn. bapt.* 28 (Campos Ruiz, 267).

[423] *cogn. bapt.* 96 (Campos Ruiz, 322 ff.).

tismal period, for which purpose he composed a separate work, *de itinere deserti*.[424] Baptism is regarded not as the culmination and final stage of the way towards faith, but rather as its beginning.[425]

Visigothic liturgy almost exclusively attests the practice of infant baptism; the *Liber Ordinum* contains an *ordo babtismi celebrandus quolibet tempore*, in which the recipient is repeatedly referred to as *infans*, in whose place *ministri* answer the questions of the priest administering baptism; however, the *Liber Ordinum* in its entirety cannot be dated into the Visigothic period.[426] Preparation of those applying for baptism is reflected nowhere; baptismal instruction has been replaced by exorcisms, in accordance with the tendency prevailing in late antiquity and the early middle ages. According to the said *ordo* these rites are performed immediately before baptism. It should be noted that the *oratio super convertente Iudeo* contained in the *Liber Ordinum*[427] does not refer in any way to a possible preparatory instruction of the Jew; in accordance with tradition it rather mentions Nicodemus, the conventional New Testament type of the convert.[428] Apparently God himself is the true and proper instructor, while the contingent conditions of this instruction seem to be of secondary importance; they are not hinted at in any way. Baptismal preparation is replaced by divine revelation and guidance. The "blind" and "ignorant" Jew is ritually "instructed" during the administration of baptism; he is literally led out of his crude state by faith itself: *fide eruditus*.[429] God is likewise left in charge of postbaptismal instruction, even if this may be a reflection of conventional liturgical language.[430]

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[424] He highlights the necessity of instruction before and after baptism *cogn. bapt.* 2. 114 (Campos Ruiz, 239. 346).

[425] *cogn. bapt.* 19 (Campos Ruiz, 257).

[426] Férotin, *Liber Ordinum*, 21–36. The rituals developed for adult baptism were adapted almost without change for infant baptism; cf. Krinke, "Der spanische Taufritus im frühen Mittelalter", *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kulturgeschichte Spaniens*, Münster 1954, 44 und 116. However, the term *infans* may refer also to adults who are reborn in baptism; cf. Fisher, *Christian Initiation: Baptism in the Medieval West*, London 1965, 3f. For Spanish sources see Borobio, "Iniciación cristiana en la Iglesia hispana de los siglos VI al X", *Salmanticensis* 42 (1995), 33, referring to II Braga (572) *cc.* 7 and 9 (Vives, *Concilios visigóticos e hispano-romanos*, Barcelona/Madrid 1963, 81f.) and Ild. Tol. *cogn. bapt.* 19. 34. Baptism could be administered any time (*quolibet tempore*), which is another indication of the change regarding the practice of the early church.

[427] Férotin, *Liber Ordinum*, 105–107.

[428] Ibid. 106, 11 ff.

[429] Ibid. 106, 18.

[430] *Tu, perfice in eum initiate fidei sacramentum* (ibid. 106, 22).

In his treatise *de fide catholica* Isidore only mentions conversion in a few instances. The church rests on the conversion of its members.[431] He understands the verb *convertiri* as referring to incorporation into the church, to the acceptance of the *fides Christi*.[432] This understanding of conversion is also attested in the second book of the treatise, where he discusses the calling of the gentiles.[433] When he applies the verb *convertiri* (following a biblical passage) to God's mercy it becomes clear that an important element of conversion is the change of mind, reminiscent of Greek *metanoia*.[434] When the oriental heretic Gregory converts to Catholicism at the 2nd council of Seville, presided over by the metropolitan Isidore, this conversion is presented in the acts as an answer to the invitation made by the fathers of the council, brought about by divine grace.[435] In *de fide catholica* Isidore does not discuss the question whether conversion is also expected of those who are already members of the church, in the sense of repentance or perfection.[436] A biblical passage adduced by him is not interpreted according to the moral sense of scripture.[437] The failure to discuss conversion in detail in *de fide catholica* is probably due to the tradition of the literature *adversus Iudaeos*.

The catechumenate is not mentioned in this treatise either, nor is possible catechetic instruction or preaching after baptism. Oddly enough, conversion thus appears to be something that cannot be influenced by the church, which—according to *de fide catholica*—does not prepare or support applicants or newly baptized people. Instead, direct intervention of God is moved to the front, who is said to renew heart and mind, which is equivalent to conversion, in the sense of inner

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[431] *fid. cath.* I, 9, 8 (PL 83, 466).

[432] *fid. cath.* I, 9, 10 (PL 83, 467).

[433] *fid. cath.* II, 1, 15 (PL 83, 503).

[434] *fid. cath.* II, 24, 8 (PL 83, 532).

[435] … *ad verae fidei rectitudinem … invitavimus. … Conversus … post pravitatem haeresis ad rectitudinem fidei divina gratia promovisset* (*c.* 12; Vives, *Concilios visigóticos e hispano-romanos*, Barcelona/Madrid 1963, 171f.). For Isidore's use of *convertere* in the sense of "to translate" cf. *etym.* VI, 4, 5; VII, 1, 1 and *hist.* 8 (Rodríguez Alonso, 184; Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 84), referring to Ulfila's Bible translation into Gothic. For the use of *conversio* in an astronomic sense cf. *nat. rer. praef.* 2 (Fontaine, 169, 18f.).

[436] For conversion as repentance see *quaest. in Dtn.* 19f. (PL 83, 369f.) and *eccl. off.* II, 17, 8 (CCL 113, 82). Isidore treats the *conversi sent.* II, 7–10, referring to those undergoing repentance. All Christians are called to a *conversio continua* (*sent.* II, 8, 7; CCL 111, 110). For inner conversion cf. *sent.* II, 11, 1 (CCL 111, 115). For monastic conversion cf. *reg.* IV (Campos Ruiz, 94). For Isidore's use of *conversio* cf. Lozano Sebastián, *San Isidoro de Sevilla. Teología del pecado y la conversión*, Burgos 1976, 159.

[437] Jer. 3, 14 (*fid. cath.* II, 3, 2; PL 83, 506).

reorientation.[438] The complex question of identity and social belonging appears to be reduced to this single exegetical conclusion.[439] Nowhere in his works does Isidore ask the question whether this change of heart and mind can be prepared or supported by human cooperation.[440] This is in accordance with a tendency that gained momentum in the interpretation of baptism in early medieval Christianity; increasing emphasis was given to the immediate effectiveness of the grace of God through the administration of the sacrament, relegating catechetical instruction to the background or rendering it unnecessary altogether.[441] However, in spite of this trend some missionaries did compose treatises meant to instruct newly converted Christians in the faith. Pirmin of Reichenau, the apostle of the *Alamanni*, who was once thought to have come from the Pyrenees and to have been influenced by Visigothic culture, wrote his book *scarapsus* (his authorship was assumed at least in earlier scholarship), which contains an outline of salvation history and precise instructions for Christian life and morals.[442] It is precisely this practical aspect which is in sharp contrast to the exegetical and dogmatic outline of Isidore's *de fide catholica.*

Isidore is often thought to have written his works for the instruction and education of Visigothic society. However, it appears that he attached no importance to prebaptismal instruction; he seems to have deemed postbaptismal teaching sufficient, for which purpose he may have intended nearly all his works. The envisaged "all-encompassing christianization of society" rested on two foundations: first on baptism, through which divine grace was thought to become immediately effective, bringing about a thorough and substantial reorientation of man, and (only) second on Christian instruction, which (merely) completed

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[438] *fid. cath.* II, 5, 7; II, 24, 13 (PL 83, 510. 533).

[439] For the implications of *conversio* and identity cf. Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity*, Cambridge 1990, 8–17.

[440] *etym.* VI, 19, 42, quoting 1 Cor. 3, 7.

[441] For magical interpretations of the sacraments see v. Schubert, *Geschichte der christlichen Kirche im Frühmittelalter*, Tübingen 1921, 642. For *gratia irresistibilis* associated with the sacraments cf. Kahl, "Die ersten Jahrhunderte des missionsgeschichtlichen Mittelalters", *Die Kirche des früheren Mittelalters*, Munich 1978, 37.

[442] Löwe, "Pirmin, Willibrord und Bonifatius. Ihre Bedeutung für die Missionsgeschichte ihrer Zeit", *Die Kirche des früheren Mittelalters*, Munich 1978, 223. The author used Martin of Braga's *de correctione rusticorum*. Recently Pirmin is thought to have come from northern Gaul. For controversies concerning the authorship of the *scarapsus* cf. Frank, "Predigt (Mittelalter)", *TRE* 27 (1997), 251.

the work begun by God himself in baptism.[443] The decisive step, which marked and shaped the identity of a Christian, was the first one. The interpretation of baptism as a second creation could also lead to the assumption that it could be administered without preparation.

The distinction between these two steps is also important for an analysis of Isidore's position regarding the baptism of Jews.[444] Even though there is no evidence that he was ever in favour of the use of force, he agreed with the advocates of forced baptism regarding the successive steps to be taken. Both for Isidore and for Sisebut conversion started with baptism; Christian instruction was relegated to the postbaptismal period, which basically comprised the entire life, if not several generations, as thought by Gregory the Great.[445] These two steps can already be distinguished at the conversion of the Visigoths to Catholicism, although it was performed without baptism, only by anointment and imposition of hands:[446] instruction in Catholic faith followed only in second place, after the appropriate rites had been performed. All these instances of conversion can be interpreted as evidence of a ritualization of conversion, which in extreme cases might even lead to a ritual conceptualization of instruction.

Augustinian theology contributed to this development. In his struggle against the perfectionism of Donatists and followers of Pelagius, Augustine had repeatedly insisted that the church, while on earth, has to welcome sinners; it is a *corpus permixtum*, comprising all baptized Christians. Accordingly, baptism was regarded as the most decisive step, marking Christians off from the rest of mankind. For Augustine, baptized sinners are on a lifelong way of improvement and perfection; every day they are called upon for a new conversion, the first call having happened at baptism.[447] Until the end of his life he considered his own conversion to be incomplete. Baptism was consequently not regarded as the end of the conversion process, but rather as its start,

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[443] For Isidore's project to spread an elementary Christian culture throughout the recently united kingdom see Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville. Genèse et originalité de la culture hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*, Turnhout 2000, 192.

[444] Cf. *infra*, chapter 4.1.

[445] See *supra*, p. 83, n. 282.

[446] See the report by Reccared at III Toledo (*Regis professio fidei*; Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 64). Cf. Pijoan, "La unción y la imposición de manos en la iglesia española primitiva", *Concilio III de Toledo. XIV centenario 589–1989*, Toledo 1991, 599–609.

[447] For Augustine's interpretation of baptism cf. Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity*, Cambridge 1990, 52–55.

as the beginning of a lifelong way of perfection.[448] This concept provides the basis for Isidore's exposition in the *sententiae*, where he wants to teach first individual and later social conversion.[449] From this perspective the so-called Isidorian educational programme appears as an appeal for continuous efforts to achieve personal conversion.

In his monastic rule Isidore prescribes a probation period, during which way of life and inner attitudes of the novices have to be tested before they are accepted into the monastic community. This constitutes an implicit parallel to the regulation of the catechumenate developed centuries earlier, even though the duration of three months laid down in the rule does not correspond to the steps of the catechumenate.[450] Nobody is to be admitted into the community of monks unless he has converted *rigida intentione*; therefore the candidate's humility and patience have to be tested. This is another parallel to the catechumenate, which provided for an extended and intense period of preparation. The—unconscious?—transfer of regulations from the *ordo catechumenorum* to the *ordo monachorum* shows the growing importance of monasticism, which considered itself to be the true *militia Christi*,[451] upholding the tradition of the early martyrs and ascetics. Ideals that had been considered normative during the time of the early church (and which had therefore been inculcated into every future Christian during the catechumenate) were increasingly reserved for those who had converted to a monastic life, whose exponents regarded themselves as a separate order, more thoroughly "christianized" than the rest of society.[452]

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[448] For conversion, the first act of grace, as a single and instantaneous event, as opposed to lifelong growth in scriptural understanding as only the second such act see Howe, "Weisheit und Demut bei Augustinus", *Gelehrte in der Antike*, Cologne *et al.* 2002, 226.

[449] Cazier, "Derrière l'impersonnalité des *Sentences*. Aperçus sur la personnalité d'Isidore de Séville", *De Tertullien aux Mozarabes*, Paris 1992, II, 16f.

[450] *reg.* IV (Campos Ruiz, 94). In his statements concerning the *vita contemplativa* Isidore stresses that this way of life has to be preceded by a test of the *vita activa* (*sent.* III, 15, 3; CCL 111, 241).

[451] Isidore uses this term immediately after discussing the regulations concerning novices (*reg.* IV; Campos Ruiz, 94).

[452] The parallelization of baptism and *conversio* finally led to monastic vows being considered a second baptism; cf. Bernard of Clairvaux, *de praecepto et dispensatione* XVII, 54 (ed. Winkler, Innsbruck 1990, I, 416–418). This parallelization may be implied in a sermon attributed to Faustus of Reims (ca. 455–480: *ad monachos* [PL 58, 875]). An Irish collection of canons, compiled around 800, expressly equates monastic vows and baptism (PL 150, 61; *secundum baptismum*). However, repentance is more often referred to as a second baptism.

In his rule Isidore insists on a written (in a later part on a written
or oral) promise of the novice in which he declares his firm inten-
tion to remain in the monastery.[453] This form of legal self-obligation
corresponds to the *placitum* the Jews of Toledo had to subscribe a few
months after Isidore's death. The tendency to regulate different spheres
of human life by help of written contracts is also present in a spe-
cial feature of Visigothic monasticism, the contract between abbot and
monks.[454] This trend towards legalization and written fixation can be
regarded as the counterpart of the neglect of baptismal instruction. It
appears that legal contracts and the immediate effects of sacramen-
tal grace were believed to have more force than tests and instruction
of novices or applicants for baptism. In the final analysis this shift of
emphasis shows that important sectors of the Visigothic population had
trust neither in human instruction and preparation nor in the judge-
ment of abbots and monks when accepting novices.

In *de fide catholica* Isidore discusses baptism and unction as succes-
sive steps, without discussing liturgical or ritual questions in detail, but
he mentions neither the imposition of hands nor ritual or pedagogical
preparation. This is probably due to the fact that the biblical types for
the imposition of hands are only found in the New Testament, which
is hardly ever used in *de fide catholica*.[455] However, it is striking that the
author fails to discuss the catechumenate at all in this treatise. It is
equally surprising that it is not presented as a contemporary practice
in other works, where he merely repeats ancient traditions from the
time when adult baptism was prevalent. It is also noteworthy that in
a treatise on Catholic faith the way leading towards this very faith is
not described, which may imply that the work was written for people
who have already made their way to the church. It is true that neither
catechumenate nor preparation for baptism formed part of the tradi-
tional agenda of literature *adversus Iudaeos*; however, Isidore felt free to
shift the focus of his argument to problems he considered essential, even
to leave out important questions such as the discussion of Jewish dietary
rules. His lack of interest in the catechumenate may be a reflection
of the early medieval tendency to give priority to divine grace, whose

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[453] *reg. mon.* IV (Campos Ruiz, 95).

[454] Bishko, "The Pactual Tradition in Hispanic Monasticism", *Spanish and Portugese Monastic History 600–1300*, London 1984, I (1–43).

[455] Isidore does mention the impositon of hands elsewhere; cf. *etym.* VI, 19, 50–51 and *eccl. off.* II, 27, 1–4 (CCL 113, 107 f.), in the context of a systematic discussion of baptism.

effects were believed to be immediate and substantial. Such an attitude could favour forced baptisms because it provided the basis for regarding those forcefully baptized as full-fledged Christians, in whom God's grace would be able to complete the christianization process.

2.4. *The addressees of Isidore's anti-Jewish treatise*

The analysis of Isidore's treatise *de fide catholica* showed that it was not written for missionary purposes. The bulk of the argument would never have convinced Jews of the truth of Christian exegesis and teaching because Christian dogma is taken as an *a priori* basis and point of reference; moreover, in most cases the biblical quotations do not correspond to the version of the text that was deemed authoritative by late antique Jews. Isidore's argument sticks to traditional patristic exegesis, avoiding sharp polemics; he rather feels sorry for the Jews because of their alleged blindness. The purpose of the treatise is rather apologetic than polemic, or put differently: anti-Jewish polemics serve apologetic ends, being directed not at Jews but at Christians, for whom the author presents complementary images of Judaism and Christianity.

Unlike in pre-Christian or pre-Constantinian times the apology is no longer directed at a "neutral" third party that would have had to be convinced of the truth of one's own position.[456] The demise of the pagan philosophical elite had completely changed the intellectual field, eliminating one of the main components for which apologies had been written. It is important to remember that precisely with a view to this group the Augustinian theory of Jewish witness had been devised. With the integration of ever larger numbers of people into the church, who were not yet "christianized" internally, it became necessary to direct "apologetic" efforts towards this in-group, no more towards an out-group.[457] Those who were only nominal Christians or whose faith lacked theological foundation needed to be instructed in the fundamentals of their own religion.[458] This structural change was

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[456] González Salinero, *Las conversiones forzosas de los judíos en el reino visigodo*, Rome 2000, 120–123.

[457] Merton, "The Perspectives of Insiders and Outsiders", *The Sociology of Science. Theoretical and Empirical Investigations*, Chicago 1973, 99–136.

[458] A similar function was intended by Philo of Alexandria when he composed his works on the Jewish religion. His apologetics were very much directed at Jews who felt attracted to pagan philosophy and religion. Philo wanted to render them "immune" to

due to Christianity's new position as an official religion. As a result, apologies became similar to catechetical treatises, both methods from now on being directed at Christian addressees. Polemics could be used to underpin both the apologetic and—to a minor extent—also the catechetical argument.[459] On the Iberian peninsula this aspect became especially prominent after the conversion of the Goths to Catholicism.

When writing his treatise *de fide catholica*, Isidore attempted to summarize Catholic doctrine for Christians who still needed to be instructed in their faith. Even though he uses Judaism as a negative foil, he does not refer to anti-Christian Jewish polemic traditions which were later included in the *Toledot Yeshu*, although both Tertullian and Origen had known such traditions.[460] Had he wanted to address forcefully baptized Jews, Isidore would have relied on proof that would have been authoritative and normative for them, a method he observed when dealing with the Syrian bishop Gregory in 619.[461] The fact that he treats some very prominent elements of traditional Jewish life, such as dietary laws and some religious holidays, very summarily, is an indication that his potential addressees were not thought to observe such practices. On the other hand the temple sacrifices are discussed in some detail, although these had not been practiced for centuries. When he discusses seasons

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these influences by something called "mission intérieure" by Will/Orrieux, *"Prosélytisme juif?" Histoire d'une erreur*, Paris 1992, 97; for Philo's works as part of inner-Jewish communication cf. ibid. 16f., 23 and 82.

[459] "Polemics … serves as a major tool in group-identity building and affirming." (Stroumsa, "From Anti-Judaism to Antisemitism in Early Christianity?", *Contra Iudaeos. Ancient and Medieval Polemics between Christians and Jews*, Tübingen 1996, 18).

[460] Orig. *c. Cels.* III, 1 (SC 136, 16): Celsus reports a Jewish claim according to which Jesus had used magic to mislead the people. It is unlikely that polemical treatises belonged to the body of Jewish scriptures mentioned in the Toledo *placitum* of 637/38, because these are said to have been used in synagogues, a highly unusual place for the (public) reading of such works (see *infra*, p. 120). On the other hand the probably Christian authors of the *placitum* may not have been acquainted with details of Jewish practice as regards different categories of scriptures.

[461] Against Parente, "La controversia tra Ebrei e Cristiani in Francia e in Spagna dal VI al IX secolo", *Gli ebrei nell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 26 (1980), 565 ("Se una controparte ebraica può essere immaginata è, quindi, più verosimile pensare a Ebrei che vivevano da cristiani, ma pensavano ancora da ebrei") and Díez Merino, "San Isidoro de Sevilla y la polémica judeocristiana", *La controversia judeocristiana en España*, Madrid 1998, 98 ("Isidoro … va haciendo catequesis y captación de aquellos judíos que habían sido forzados por las leyes visigóticas a abrazar la fe cristiana externamente, pero que sus mentes estaban lejos de la nueva fe"). Isidore's approach and argument do not bear out the label "actitud pastoral", at least not with regard to an alleged intention to conduct missionary activities among Jews (ibid. 110).

and holidays in his treatise *de natura rerum*, Isidore also mentions Jewish feasts such as the New Moon, the New Year and the Feast of Tabernacles, but he always uses the past tense, creating the false impression that these holidays are no longer celebrated.[462] He relies entirely on Jerome, not giving any indication that he might have been acquainted with contemporary Jewish custom and belief.[463] This is also true for his claim that the Hebrew year starts in the spring, as suggested by a reading of the Old Testament.[464] Like most patristic authors, Isidore presents an "antiquarian" image of Judaism, which can be taken as evidence that he did not have contemporary Jews in mind when he wrote his works.

His treatise *de fide catholica* is dedicated to his sister Florentina; the primary aim is said to be her "edification".[465] Elsewhere he indicates that edification is not only the intended purpose of the works of the fathers, but also of the Bible itself.[466] He uses *aedificatio* only with reference to study, exegesis and teaching.[467] Patristic authors had often associated this term with preaching.[468] It is unlikely that Isidore would have made the effort of writing a treatise in two books if it had been destined for one person only. His sister may have prompted the idea, but she is merely a representative of the group of potential readers.[469] The great number of early manuscripts, its inclusion in Braulio's work list and quotations in later Visigothic texts leave no doubt that it received

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[462] *nat. rer.* 1, 3 (Fontaine, 175, 27–35).

[463] Against Díez Merino, "San Isidoro de Sevilla y la polémica judeocristiana", *La controversia judeocristiana en España*, Madrid 1998, 79, who wants to find "noticias sobre los judíos de su tiempo" and "una perspectiva de prevalente comprensión" in Isidore's works (ibid., 96).

[464] *nat. rer.* 6, 2 (Fontaine, 193, 11 f.).

[465] See *supra*, p. 39.

[466] *eccl. off.* I, 11, 7 (CCL 113, 11).

[467] *eccl. off.* I, 10, 1 (CCL 113, 8. 9); *syn.* II, 70 (PL 83, 861). For the exegetical dimension see *quaest. in I Reg.* 3, 5 (PL 83, 395). The verb *aedificare* is also used referring to good works: *Factis bene loquitur qui alios bonis exemplis aedificat* (*sent.* II, 29, 18; CCL 111, 150). See also IV Toledo *c.* 25 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 216).

[468] Aug. *serm. Frangipane* 2, 4 (Miscellanea Agostiniana I, Rome 1930, 193, 22 f.): *Praedicare autem, arguere, corripere, aedificare, pro unoquoque satagere*; Orig. *hom. in Lev.* VII, 1 (SC 286, 298). For Paul the *aedificatio* of the church is more important than his own (1 Cor. 14, 4. 12b). For the use of *aedificatio* by Christian authors see also Heinzelmann, *Gregor von Tours (538–594): "Zehn Bücher Geschichte": Historiographie und Gesellschaftskonzept im 6. Jahrhundert*, Darmstadt 1994, 150 f.

[469] On the other hand Leander wrote his treatise *de institutione virginum* exclusively for his sister. Pérez de Urbel (*Los monjes españoles en la edad media*, Madrid 1933/34, I, 227) points out that this is not a monastic rule, directed at a community, but a personal exhortation of the author to his sister. This work shows, however, a far more personal character than Isidore's *de fide catholica*.

widespread attention, if not in Isidore's lifetime, certainly later in 7th-
century Spain. In antiquity it was common practice for authors to dedi-
cate their works to addressees.[470] The works with dedications may have
been a response to a particular question asked by the addressees.[471]

One trend of scholarship is inclined to assume that Isidore's literary
activities were mainly directed at clerics.[472] This hypothesis disregards
the high level of culture among the laity, for which King Sisebut is
an outstanding but not the only example. It was Sisebut who commis-
sioned Isidore to start work on his *de natura rerum* and on the *Etymolo-
gies*.[473] Isidore fought against ignorance not only among the clergy;[474]
nobody was allowed to plead lack of knowledge.[475] A canon of the 4th

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[470] Díaz y Díaz, "Introducción general", *San Isidoro de Sevilla: Etimologías*, Madrid 1982,
139. A number of Isidore's other works are dedicated to other people as well, the
allegoriae to Orosius, possibly a bishop, the *Etymologies* to Sisebut or Braulio, *de natura
rerum* to Sisebut and *de ecclesiasticis officiis* to his brother Fulgentius, bishop of Écija.

[471] Fontaine writes about the dedicatory letters: "Le traité qu'elles accompagnent est
donc d'abord une réponse à une question posée par le correspondant à qui est dédié cet
ouvrage." (Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique*, Paris
1959/83, 876). This statement refers merely to Isidore's "profane" works (the *Etymologies*
and *de natura rerum*). However, the situation will not have been much different in case of
his theological writings.

[472] Mullins, *The Spiritual Life according to Saint Isidore of Seville*, Washington 1940, 32,
for whom his works are handbooks for the education and instruction of the cergy.
Albert maintains an identity of culture and clergy, which she alleges to have prevailed
in Visigothic Spain: "Qui dit culture et renaissance wisigothique dit clergé." ("*De
Fide Catholica Contra Judaeos* d'Isidore de Séville", *REJ* 141, 1982, 309). For the view
that Isidore's *de fide catholica* was intended as a manual of clerical instruction see also
González Salinero, *Las conversiones forzosas de los judíos en el reino visigodo*, Rome 2000, 122.

[473] Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique*, Paris 1959/
83, 876f. note 4: "On pourrait dire qu'Isidore de Séville voulut être, à l'image d'Augus-
tin, le centre d'une 'studiosa societas wisigothorum procerum', où se rejoignaient les
évêques, les abbés, le roi et sans doute quelques grands." See also the following
statement: "Le Sévillan se soucie d'inculquer une lecture orthodoxe de l'Ecriture à
ses auditeurs et lecteurs les plus divers. Il s'adresse aux élèves des écoles épiscopales
et aux laïcs lettrés, tout autant qu'aux moines pratiquant une *lectio diuina* personnelle
et des lectures liturgiques de l'Ecriture." (Fontaine, "Isidore de Séville pédagogue et
théoricien de l'exégèse", *Stimuli. Exegese und ihre Hermeneutik in Antike und Christentum*,
Münster 1996, 424). Reydellet supports this position: "… le but visé (sc. dans l'œuvre
d'Isidore) est toujours d'élever le cœur et l'esprit des lettrés, clercs ou laïcs." (*La Royauté
dans la littérature latine de Sidoine Apollinaire à Isidore de Séville*, Rome 1981, 507). For the
level of culture in various social strata see also Collins, "Literacy and the Laity in Early
Medieval Spain", *The Uses of Literacy in Early Medieval Europe*, Cambridge 1990, 122: "It
does look as if the educational resources of the church were extended to the laity. In all
cases this presumes a certain social level."

[474] *syn.* II, 65 (PL 83, 860).

[475] *sent.* II, 17, 6 (CCL 111, 131).

council of Toledo shows the same tendency, criticizing ignorance especially (!) of priests.[476] In order to increase the general level of culture Isidore recommends reading and study.[477]

There are several examples of laypeople in Visigothic Spain who showed a remarkable degree of education. An aristocratic woman asked Braulio of Zaragoza for a manuscript of the biblical books of Tobit and Judith; in his answering letter Braulio explains the allegorical significance of some persons mentioned in these writings.[478] In his letter to the Lombard King Adaloald Sisebut includes several biblical quotations; his argument is further evidence of his high degree of theological learning.[479] A number of Braulio's correspondents are not members of the clergy; out of 44 extant letters 16 were written to laymen, most of whom bear Germanic names. The letter collection of count Bulgar, who administered the *Narbonnensis* at the beginning of the 7th century, is one of the most significant of this period.[480] Bulgar's letters are similar to Sisebut's in containing a number of biblical quotations. It should be mentioned in this connection that on the Visigothic slate tablets found around Salamanca, judges and witnesses wrote their signatures with their own hands.[481]

In Visigothic Spain schools were not confined to monasteries; in the cities there were schools next to basilicas, in Mérida for instance close to the church of St Eulalia.[482] The library of count Laurentius in Toledo contained works that were unaccessible to bishop Braulio

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[476] *c.* 25 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 215).

[477] *sent.* III, 9, 6 (CCL 111, 232). For Isidore's intention to educate both clergy and laity see Domínguez del Val, "Características de la patrística hispana en el siglo VII", *Patrología Toledano-Visigoda*, Madrid 1970, 26f.: "… una serie de manuales que proporcionaban al cristiano … lo más elemental para poder leer la Biblia con fruto."

[478] *ep.* 16 (Riesco Terrero, 97).

[479] For the culture of the laity in Visigothic Spain cf. Riché, *Éducation et culture dans l'occident barbare*, Paris 1962, 300–310, who dismisses tendencies to attribute learned quotations and phrases in works and letters of laymen to clerical assistance. In addition to Sisebut also the kings Chintila and Chindasvinth were interested in matters of culture; the latter dispatched the future bishop Taio of Zaragoza to Rome in order to procure some works of Gregory the Great that had not yet reached Spain; see ibid. 309. For the relatively high degree of aristocratic culture in 7th-century Spain cf. id., "L'enseignement et la culture des laïcs dans l'occident pré-carolingien", *La scuola nell'occidente latino dell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 19 (1972), 234f.

[480] Orlandis, *La vida en España en tiempo de los godos*, Madrid 1991, 76f.; edition by Gil, *Misc. Wisig.* X–XV.

[481] Díaz y Díaz, "La obra literaria de los obispos visigóticos toledanos", *Patrología Toledano-Visigoda*, Madrid 1970, 53.

[482] *VPE* I (CCL 116, 6; Fear, *Lives of the Visigothic Fathers*, 46).

in Zaragoza.[483] At the royal court there was another library.[484] In the middle of the 7th century the layman Teudisclus stood out for his excellent learning.[485] It should be noted in this context that the educated kings Sisebut and Chindasvinth had not acquired their education in a process that would have prepared them for their royal office; both had been elected, and their accession to the throne cannot have been the purpose of their upbringing. They were rather educated as "simple" Visigothic noblemen, which is another indication for the (general) level of culture among the aristocracy.[486] Members of the laity knew the principles of biblical hermeneutics; Florentina was admonished by her brother Leander to interpret the Old Testament in the spiritual sense only.[487] In view of this a layman interested in theology such as Sisebut could read and understand not only the Bible, but also a treatise such as Isidore's *de fide catholica*.

Theologically educated laypeople participated in the religious culture of Visigothic Spain, which was not limited to a clerical elite. It is therefore reasonable to assume that Isidore's treatise against the Jews was directed at potentially all theologically educated people; it was intended to be read by men and women such as Florentina, Sisebut, the aristocratic correspondents of Braulio and many others. The distinction of clergy and laity should not be exaggerated in this context, especially since Florentina as the nominal addressee, although a consecrated virgin, was rather part of the latter group.[488] Contrary to Albert's claim,[489] education in Visigothic Spain was not limited to clerical circles. Isidore himself dedicated a number of his works to laypeople such as Sisebut and Florentina; this is a clear indication that he did not limit his "educational programme" to the clergy; on the contrary, he wanted to instill theological learning in as broad a sector of the population

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[483] *ep.* 25 (Riesco Terrero, 122).

[484] Braulio, *ep.* 26 (Riesco Terrero, 124).

[485] *vit. Fruct.* VIII (Díaz y Díaz, 90–92).

[486] It is unclear whether there was a palace school in Toledo, as indicated in later Arabic sources; cf. Collins, "Literacy and the Laity in Early Medieval Spain", *The Uses of Literacy in Early Medieval Europe*, Cambridge 1990, 116.

[487] See *supra*, p. 40.

[488] Nuns and virgins were consecrated (the *Liber Ordinum* calls them veiled, *velatae*), but they did not belong to the clergy. This was originally also true for monks; already in 385 Pope Siricius states in a letter to bishop Himerius of Tarragona that monks can be admitted to the priesthood, but proper terms and intervals of time have to be observed.

[489] See *supra*, p. 114, n. 472.

as possible, first of all the new "Gothic" elite.[490] A primary means to achieve this was the education of the clergy, which was entrusted with preaching and education. It is remarkable that it was precisely the 4ᵗʰ council of Toledo that insisted that no-one should be given a position of authority in the church who was unable to teach and transmit things that had been entrusted to him.

The addressees of Isidore's works should always be taken as "typical" representatives of groups for whom the works were actually written.[491] Florentina is, however, not a representative of the clergy, but of all people in Visigothic Spain who possessed some theological education. The fact that the treatise *de fide catholica* was written for a woman should warn against jumping to the conclusion that it is one of Isidore's "handbooks" for educating clerics.[492] It is certainly not unreasonable to suggest that it was also used for reference by priests who prepared their sermons, but this is merely one aspect of the *studium* mentioned by Isidore in his dedicatory letter; in addition it also served as a manual of biblical hermeneutics for laypersons, and this not only for monastic reading. He wrote his treatise *de ortu et obitu patrum* for readers who were acquainted with the Bible, but who nevertheless welcomed a manual containing the most important information, which may be a hint that their knowledge was in fact not very thorough;[493] a similar purpose can be assumed for *de fide catholica*. The *studium* of clergy and laypeople should be taken as a reference to Isidore's "educational programme", which encompassed the clerical and secular elite as well as broader sectors of Visigothic society, aiming at its thorough christianization.[494] His

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[490] Fontaine refers to the dedication of the *Etymologies* to Sisebut and Braulio as follows: "Il s'agit donc bien de la formation des laïcs et des clercs qui ont charge de responsabilité et sont amenés à exercer leurs pouvoirs par la *parole* orale et écrite." ("Cassiodore et Isidore: L'Évolution de l'encyclopédisme latin du VIᵉ au VIIᵉ siècle", *Tradition et actualité chez Isidore de Séville*, London 1988, 89 note 46). As an "abbess" Florentina also had an office that required her to exercise authority over her community through words.

[491] Fontaine, "Problèmes de méthode dans l'étude des sources isidoriennes", *Isidoriana*, León 1961, 126.

[492] Against Gil, "Judíos y cristianos en la Hispania del siglo VII", *Hispania Sacra* 30 (1977), 45: "El tratado de San Isidoro se dirige más bien al adoctrinamiento de los sacerdotes que han de evangelizar a los judíos." Beltrán Torreira ("La herejía y sus imágenes en las obras exegéticas y pedagógicas de San Isidoro de Sevilla", *AEM* 17, 1987, 17) is more cautious: Isidore's works would have been written for the education of the clergy and indirectly also of the laity.

[493] *ort. et obit. praef.* (Chaparro Gómez, 103).

[494] For Isidore's programme cf. Fontaine, "Isidor von Sevilla", *RAC* 18 (1998), 1004.

treatise *de natura rerum* with its refutation of "pagan" and "superstitious" beliefs and practices can be considered part of a *correctio rusticorum*.[495]

Sometimes the author of *de fide catholica* asks rhetorical questions; the imperative is rarely used at all.[496] The Jews are mostly referred to in the third person (*cognoscant Iudaei, respondeant Iudaei*); Jewish objections are also styled in this form.[497] Isidore cannot have hoped to convince or impress Jews with his arguments.[498] Apparently active mission among Jews did not form part of his programme for christianizing Visigothic society; he rather focussed on spreading Christian culture among Goths and Catholic Hispano-Romans, who were to merge in the new *gens Gothorum*. This limitation of his argument is in keeping with Isidore's rather defensive approach to Christian heresies.[499]

His information on Judaism is almost exclusively derived from the Bible and patristic tradition, the one exception being the mysterious Jewish king in the orient discussed below.[500] There is no further evidence for contacts between Isidore and contemporary Jews. He is totally unfamiliar with rabbinic thinking;[501] instead he applies Christian ways of thinking to Judaism, such as the Christian understanding of the Messiah. This is a strong indication that he in fact neither wanted to argue with any real Jewish positions nor convince Jews of the truth of

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For the Christian ideal of a *reformatio in melius*, which is first attested by Tertullian, cf. Girardet, "*Renovatio imperii* aus dem Geist des Christentums", *ZAC* 4 (2000), 107.

   [495] Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville: Traité de la Nature*, Bordeaux 1960, 6.

   [496] *Dic, quaeso, quis est iste fons patens, nisi in quo omnes renascimur?* (*fid. cath.* II, 24, 3; PL 83, 531). A baptized Jew might be imagined as an addressee, but the analysis of Isidore's overall argument has shown that this is highly unlikely.

   [497] *Sed hinc isti Filium, et Spiritum sanctum non reputant esse Deum* (*fid. cath.* I, 4, 1; PL 83, 457).

   [498] *fid. cath.* I, 5, 11; II, 28, 1 (PL 83, 462. 536).

   [499] Cazier, "Derrière l'impersonnalité des *Sentences*. Aperçus sur la personnalité d'Isidore de Séville", *De Tertullien aux Mozarabes*, Paris 1992, II, 12: "Cette attitude défensive vaut aussi pour l'Église face aux hérésies … Isidore n'envisage pas une attitude de conquête active."

   [500] See *infra*, p. 153. Fontaine (*Isidore de Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique*, Paris 1959/83, 433) points out that Isidore depends on Augustine for the use of "trumpets" on the New Moon; cf. *etym*. III, 21, 3 and Aug. *enarr. in Ps.* 80, 6 (CCL 39, 1123). He has some knowledge of the Jewish *minyan* (*eccl. off.* I, 3, 2; CCL 113, 5). For further evidence concerning his ignorance in Jewish matters see Albert, "*De Fide Catholica Contra Judaeos* d'Isidore de Séville", *REJ* 141 (1982), 294–297.

   [501] The reception of rabbinic literature for an argument *adversus Iudaeos* only started in the 9th century. Only in the high middle ages did Christian theologians become aware of the fact that Judaism had undergone fundamental changes since biblical times. Petrus Alfonsi, a Jewish convert to Christianity, was the first to include references to rabbinic literature in his anti-Jewish argument at the beginning of the 12th century; cf. Lazar,

the Christian point of view. It is remarkable that Isidore does mention the oral tradition when discussing the Pharisees in the *Etymologies*,[502] but that he fails to take this important point into account when arguing against the Jews. This may be due to the fact that he was unaware of the ongoing, fundamental significance of the oral law for contemporary rabbinic Judaism.

This is in stark contrast to the method he adopted during his controversy with the Syrian "Monophysite" Gregory at the 2nd council of Seville.[503] Isidore wanted to win him over to the theology of the council of Chalcedon; in order to achieve his aim he took great care to confront his opponent with arguments taken from traditions deemed authoritative by the addressee of his argument, even quoting from writings by Justinian, although the emperor was suspected of heretical inclinations.[504] Justinian was, however, an eminent authority in Gregory's eyes.[505] This is an indication that Isidore was well aware of the strategies of persuasive argument based on an understanding and caring approach.[506] Accordingly, an effective argument against the Jews would have required explicit reference to living Jewish tradition.

It is unclear to what extent rabbinic teaching had gained ground among the Jews of Visigothic Spain. Concerning the late Roman empire, Stemberger is very cautious: "… the Jewish communitites of the west seem not to have known very much about rabbinic develop-

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"Anti-Jewish and Anti-*Converso* Propaganda: *Confutatio libri talmud* and *Alboraique*", *The Jews of Spain and the Expulsion of 1492*, Lancaster/Calif. 1997, 156.

[502] *etym.* VIII, 4, 3.

[503] Gregory may have come to Spain on a "pastoral visit" to "oriental" colonies; cf. Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville. Genèse et originalité de la culture hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*, Turnhout 2000, 125.

[504] As Isidore himself states in his *Chronicle* (*chron.* 397a; CCL 112, 193): *Iste Acefalorum heresem suscipiens omnes in regno suo episcopos tria Calcedonensis concilii capitula damnare conpellit.*

[505] Madoz, "El florilegio patrístico del concilio II de Sevilla", *Miscellanea Isidoriana*, Rome 1936, 199: "… la táctica del polemista en querer refutar al acéfalo Gregorio con sus propias armas sacadas del arsenal de Justiniano." In contrast to Isidore Jerome adopted this approach also with regard to the Jews; cf. González Salinero, *Biblia y polémica antijudía en Jerónimo*, Madrid 2003, 55–91 and 214f.

[506] *syn.* II, 72 (PL 83, 862): *In omni disputatione tene rationem, disputare stude, non superare; plus dilige audire quam dicere, plus auscultare quam loqui.* Braulio describes Isidore's approach at the council of Seville in his *renotatio* as follows: *Quo vero flumine eloquentiae et quot iaculis divinarum scripturarum seu patrum testimoniis acephalorum haeresin confoderit* (Lynch/Galindo, 359f.; Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville. Genèse et originalité de la culture hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*, Turnhout 2000, 433).

ments."[507] According to Díaz y Díaz, "certain sources" suggest that bib-
lical studies and "enseñanza masorética" had taken ground in Visi-
gothic Spain.[508] Isidore was certainly unaware of such developments.
Institutions of higher Jewish learing (*yeshivot*) that were independent
from the Mesopotamian centres only started to develop in the west after
the middle of the 8th century,[509] but schools of elementary Jewish educa-
tion certainly existed before the Islamic and Carolingian periods. Jew-
ish *magistri* are already mentioned by the so-called Ambrosiaster.[510] In
his letter from 418 Severus of Minorca reports that the most respectable
local Jew, Theodorus, was *legis doctor* and *pater pateron* in the Jewish com-
munity.[511] The first title is a fairly clear indication that Theodorus had
been instructed in Jewish tradition, the Torah, but it is impossible to
tell whether he had received his education in a school or in private.
Severus' letter contains no evidence that rabbinic literature or halakha
had been received by the Jews of Minorca.[512] The *scholion* accompany-
ing the letter written by bishop Aurasius of Toledo at the beginning of
the 7th century mentions an *archisynagogus* and a certain Rabbi Isaac; yet
this *scholion* is in all probability a spurious later addition.[513]

A few months after Isidore's death the Jews of Toledo were forced to
subscribe a *placitum* (637/38) which mentions "apocryphal" scriptures
and writings called *deuteras* used in the synagogues.[514] This may refer
to the Mishna, because the Hebrew term contains the element of

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[507] "Exegetical Contacts between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire", *Hebrew
Bible/Old Testament. The History of Its Interpretation I/1*, Göttingen 1996, 585.

[508] Díaz y Díaz, "Introducción general", *San Isidoro de Sevilla: Etimologías*, Madrid 1982,
55.

[509] Graboïs, "Écoles et structures sociales des communautés juives dans l'occident
aux IXᵉ–XIIᵉ siècles", *Gli ebrei nell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 26 (1980), 944f.

[510] *in Eph.* IV, 12, 2 (CSEL 81, 99). A Jewish teacher (*didaskalos*) is mentioned in an
inscription from the late antique city of Rome (Speller, "Ambrosiaster and the Jews",
Studia Patristica 17/1, Oxford *et al.* 1982, 73).

[511] *ep. Sev.* 6, 2 (Bradbury, 84). In addition to Theodorus there were several more *legis
doctores* (*ep. Sev.* 21, 5; Bradbury, 114).

[512] There is no compelling evidence to invest Theodorus with "a 'rabbinical' role as
teacher and exegete of the Law" (Bradbury, *Severus of Minorca: Letter on the Conversion of the
Jews*, Oxford 1996, 31) because there is no reference to an oral tradition or to the oral
Torah in the letter.

[513] *Misc. Wisig.* XVIII, 49. Cf. González Salinero, *Las conversiones forzosas de los judíos en
el reino visigodo*, Rome 2000, 86 note 250.

[514] *Sed et scripturas omnes, quascumque usus gentis nostrae in Synagogis, causa doctrinae, habuit,
tam auctoritatem habentes, quam etiam eas quas* deuteras *appellant, sive quas apocriphas nominant,
omnes conspectui vestro praesentare pollicemur ut nullum apud nos suspicionis sinistrae vestigium*

repetition, as does the Greek one.[515] Justinian's *novella* 146 also mentions a *deuterosis*, which equally may refer to the Mishna.[516] However, since Justinian's decree mentions scriptures which are used in synagogue services it rather aims at midrashim and aggadic traditions.

Patristic authors also knew Jewish *deuteroseis*;[517] their use of the term *deuterosis* is, however, rather imprecise.[518] It should be noted that the Visigothic *placitum* distinguishes between two, perhaps even three different groups of scriptures; the *deuteras* are set apart from the authoritative ones. The *placitum* was probably drawn up by a Christian author, who may have been of Jewish descent.[519] He may have referred to targumim or writings of the rabbinic corpus, whose rank was inferior to that of the Hebrew or Greek Bible from the Jewish point of view. We should, however, not identify the "authoritative" scriptures with the Talmud and the second group with "rabbinic texts and commentaries".[520] It is improbable that the whole Talmud had reached Spain by the Visigothic period;[521] only in the second half of the 8th century Natronaï Ben Habibaï is said to have come from Babylonia to the Iberian peninsula, where he would have dictated the Talmud to his disciples from memory.[522] Schubert dates the reception of talmudic literature in western

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relinquatur (PL Suppl. 4, 1666); for dating this source (December 637) cf. Orlandis, *Die Synoden auf der Iberischen Halbinsel bis zum Einbruch des Islam*, Paderborn *et al.* 1981, 179.

[515] For identifying the scriptures mentioned in the *placitum* with the Mishna see Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, Oxford 1969, 186 and Juster, *Les Juifs dans l'Empire Romain*, Paris 1914, 372 f. See also *LV* XII, 3, 11 (MGH, LL, I, 1, 438) from the time of King Ervig (680–687).

[516] Simon, *Verus Israel*, Paris 1948, 350 note 2. However, according to Veltri this term is intended to comprise the whole body of rabbinic literature; cf. id., "Die Novelle 146 *peri Hebraiōn*", *Die Septuaginta zwischen Judentum und Christentum*, Tübingen 1994, 117 and 128.

[517] Jerome, *ep.* 121, 10, 19 (CSEL 56/1, 48) and *in Hab.* I, 2 (CCL 76 A, 610). See also Aug. *enarr. in Ps.* 118, 20, 5 (CCL 40, 1732) and *c. adv. leg. et proph.* II, 1, 2; II, 2, 6 (CCL 49, 87 f. 95). Isidore uses the term *pro.* 39 (PL 83, 165). For Jerome see González Salinero, *Biblia y polémica antijudía en Jerónimo*, Madrid 2003, 95–117.

[518] Bietenhard, "Deuterosis", *RAC* 3 (1957), 842–849.

[519] For the possible authorship of Braulio of Zaragoza see González Salinero, "Catholic Anti-Judaism in Visigothic Spain", *The Visigoths. Studies in Culture and Society*, Leiden *et al.* 1999, 131 and id., *Las conversiones forzosas de los judíos en el reino visigodo*, Rome 2000, 59.

[520] Against García Moreno, *Los Judíos de la España Antigua*, Madrid 1993, 96 f.

[521] Until the 8th century the Babylonian Talmud (to say nothing of the Palestinian one) had not reached Europe; cf. Graboïs, "Écoles et structures sociales des communautés juives dans l'occident aux IXe–XIIe siècles", *Gli ebrei nell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 26 (1980), 943.

[522] Cf. ibid., 946. In the commentary of Rabbi Isaac Barceloni to the *Sefer Yezirah* Isaac bar Ahatiah is credited with the transmission of the oral law to the Spanish

Europe only to the 10th century.[523] However, isolated rabbinic traditions may have reached the west already before that time.

A similar dichotomy of two different groups of Jewish scriptures is found in Justinian's *novella* 146.[524] It is possible that the Visigothic *placitum* imitated the Byzantine verdict. For our analysis it is noteworthy that this source from Toledo, dating from 637/38, probably mentions (some) rabbinic teachings (or targumim), while nowhere in his entire œuvre Isidore makes any reference to the presence of such literature in Spain. Since the *placitum* is the earliest evidence from Spanish territory,[525] it cannot be proved with certainty that such writings and teachings could have been known to Isidore as well. However, he chaired the 4th council of Toledo in 633, which dealt with several questions pertaining to Jewish affairs, so that he might have known the existence of such traditions. His silence is another indication of his lack of interest in the lives of contemporary Jews, and it is all the more telling in view of the fact that he does mention the existence of the mysterious Jewish king in the east. This contradiction between knowledge of a certain oriental tradition and ignorance concerning Visigothic Judaism clearly shows that Isidore was either unwilling or unable to give up his own, traditional point of view, if only to approach Jewish opponents for an

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diaspora; for sources substantiating the two different accounts cf. Rosenthal, "Text History and Problems of Redaction of the Babylonian Talmud" (hebr.), *Tarbiz* 57 (1987/88), 9.

[523] Schubert, *Jüdische Geschichte*, Munich 1995, 32. For questions directed by Spanish Jews to the academies of the geonim in Mesopotamia in the 10th, possibly already in the 9th century, cf. Menache, "Communication in the Jewish Diaspora: A Survey", *Communication in the Jewish Diaspora. The Pre-Modern World*, Leiden *et al.* 1996, 36f. In the Cairo Genizah a copy of a letter was found that had been sent in 953 from Pumbedita in Mesopotamia to Spain (Oxf. Bodl. MS heb. 2860 = heb. f. 34, nr. 15a, f. 39; cf. Neubauer/Cowley, *Catalogue of the Hebrew Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library*, Oxford 1906, 346); the text relates that Spanish Jews formerly used to direct questions to the geonim; however, this practice had been given up in the meantime. This in an indication of the increased confidence and self-awareness of Spanish Jews in the Ummayad period.

[524] According to Veltri ("Die Novelle 146 *peri Hebraiōn*", *Die Septuaginta zwischen Judentum und Christentum*, Tübingen 1994, 118) this decree was the earliest prohibition of rabbinic teaching, motivated by Christian missionary intentions. See also Bietenhard, "Deuterosis", *RAC* 3 (1957), 848 and Klingenberg, "Justinians Novellen zur Judengesetzgebung", *Aschkenas* 8 (1998), 24f.

[525] The letter of Severus of Minorca (418) only mentions the law (*lex*), which could also refer to the Old Testament, since this term does not necessarily refer to rabbinic teaching.

intellectual argument.[526] His image of Judaism is constructed from a Christian perspective, it is based on Christian foundations and marked by parametres taken from the Old Testament.[527] While Justinian had intended to "cleanse" Judaism from "heretical ideas" by his *novella* in order to abolish theological impediments that might have hindered his missionary endeavours,[528] Isidore shows no such intentions; unlike Justinian and the authors of the Toledan *placitum* he made no effort to keep the Jews from rabbinic teaching and to separate Judaism from its ongoing and living tradition. He sticks to the patristic notion awaiting the conversion of the Jews at the end of time; he is content with this eschatological expectation, and he does not advocate any political measures hastening the conversion of contemporary Jews. His educational concerns and endeavours, including his activities as an author, were limited to the Christian population, including, however, (forcefully) baptized Jews.

Especially the reference to the writings called *deuteras* in the *placitum* is fairly clear evidence that some rabbinic writings were present in 7th-century Spain. A Latin inscription from Mérida, which is dated by different authors into the 4th, 6th, 7th, or even as late as the 8th or 10th century, mentions a certain Rabbi Jacob, son of Rabbi Senior.[529] If the early dating is correct, this is evidence for the use of the title *rabbi* in Visigothic Spain. In case there existed rabbinic schools, an apologist of Christianity having contemporary Jews in mind would have needed to understand the way of thinking of his opponents in order to be able to refute them with their own arguments, something Isidore successfully achieved in 619 when he converted the Syrian bishop Gregory. Forcefully baptized Jews would have had to be confronted with detailed proof from the Hebrew Bible and rabbinic tradition, had he wanted to win a similar victory. Even if the term *deuteras* found in the *placitum*

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[526] Carolingian authors of the 9th century betray a similar lack of interest in contemporary Judaism; cf. Heil, *Kompilation oder Konstruktion? Die Juden in den Pauluskommentaren des 9. Jahrhunderts*, Hannover 1998, 205.

[527] Therefore the treatise *de fide catholica* should not be interpreted as an answer to Jewish objections directed against Christianity, let alone to alleged Jewish proselytism, as wrongly suggested by Colomina ("El antijudaísmo hispanogodo y sus posibles ecos en los textos litúrgicos e ildefonsinos", *La controversia judeocristiana en España*, Madrid 1998, 186).

[528] Veltri, "Die Novelle 146 *peri Hebraiōn*", *Die Septuaginta zwischen Judentum und Christentum*, Tübingen 1994, 121.

[529] Bowers, "Jewish Communities in Spain in the Time of Paul the Apostle", *JThS* 26 (1975), 397.

refers to targumim or Greek versions of the Bible, all of them were closer to the Hebrew text than to the Septuagint version repeatedly adduced by Isidore. Not only the capacity of the 5th-century Minorcan Theodorus as *legis doctor* and his argumentative skills described by Severus, but also the "apocryphal" scriptures mentioned in the much later *placitum* are indications that Spanish Jews knew their own tradition; in all probability they would have been able to refute Isidore's arguments as unfounded, if seen from the perspective of contemporary Judaism.[530]

For this reason it is problematic to locate the purpose of *de fide catholica* in Isidore's confrontation with the "vigorous and strong Jewry of Visigothic Spain".[531] It might be argued that the author was perhaps unaware of the weakness of his argument. However, it is necessary to remember that he adopted a totally different approach in order to refute the Syrian Gregory in 619, when he skillfully employed arguments from his opponent's tradition, adroitfully quoting from Justinian's *confessio rectae fidei*, which had been composed to meet objections of the "Monophysites" against the council of Chalcedon.[532] A similar approach would have been recommendable with regard to the Jews, if the author had had the same intention.[533] Another possibility is that originally he wrote the treatise in order to convince Jews; yet soon discovering that this method failed, he may have opted for a different approach towards "heretics" a few years later. Yet in this case one needs to ask the question why Isidore did not rework his argument in a second version of the treatise, similar to the second edition he prepared for his *History of the Goths* and for the *Chronicle*, which would have been all the more important as the subject touched upon one of the central problems of Visigothic church policy. However, such a revision would

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[530] The following conclusion is therefore untenable: "Probably the Spanish Jews were too ignorant and ill-versed even in their own literature for debate with clergymen of the highest rank." (Krauss/Horbury, *The Jewish-Christian Controversy*, Tübingen 1995, I, 59). On the contrary, Christian clergymen such as Isidore were ignorant of this literature.

[531] Against Fontaine, "Hispania II", *RAC* 15 (1991), 678.

[532] Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville. Genèse et originalité de la culture hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*, Turnhout 2000, 126; Madoz, "El florilegio patrístico del concilio II de Sevilla", *Miscellanea Isidoriana*, Rome 1936, 177–220.

[533] Cazier disregards the difference between the force of the arguments in *de fide catholica* on the one hand and the canons of 619 on the other, when he compares the latter to the former: "… pour rédiger, à partir d'un florilège patristique, un autre dossier christologique, parallèle à celui qu'il avait dressé contre les Juifs." (*Isidore de Séville et la naissance de l'Espagne catholique*, Paris 1994, 55).

have been impossible without competent help of Jews or Jewish converts, which Isidore did not seek out. In view of all this it seems safe to assume that he intended his work for Christian readers alone from the outset. What is more, it is hardly imaginable how Jews could have been induced or forced to read his work.

Other solutions to the problem of addressees are unconvincing. A recent investigator still credits the author with the intention to missionize the Jews,[534] which is in keeping with formerly widespread assessments of the literature *adversus Iudaeos*.[535] Nor should one assume a reaction against alleged "Jewish proselytism".[536] Jewish missionary endeavours decreased considerably even before the 7th century.[537] "Proselytism" is not considered to be an acute problem in conciliar canons passed under Isidore's presidency, which concentrate rather on mixed marriages and slaves of Jewish owners. In the *Etymologies* he explains the

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[534] Díez Merino, "San Isidoro de Sevilla y la polémica judeocristiana", *La controversia judeocristiana en España*, Madrid 1998, 85 f. and 95: "Los enemigos de la fe a quienes San Isidoro trataba de convencer de la fe católica eran los judíos de su época."

[535] Blumenkranz, "Die jüdischen Beweisgründe im Religionsgespräch mit den Christen in den christlich-lateinischen Sonderschriften des 5. bis 11. Jahrhunderts", *ThZ* 4 (1948), 119 note 1.

[536] Against Hernández Martín, "El problema de los judíos en los PP. visigodos", *Patrología Toledano-Visigoda*, Madrid 1970, 100, and still Díez Merino, "San Isidoro de Sevilla y la polémica judeocristiana", *La controversia judeocristiana en España*, Madrid 1998, 82; Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville. Genèse et originalité de la culture hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*, Turnhout 2000, 239; Colomina Torner, "El antijudaísmo hispanogodo y sus posibles ecos en los textos litúrgicos e ildefonsinos", *La controversia judeocristiana en España*, Madrid 1998, 186: "Hubo, lógicamente (!), proselitismo judío." Colomina even speculates that the alleged proselytism of Jews prompted Florentina to ask her brother for the treatise against the Jews. González Salinero ("Catholic Anti-Judaism in Visigothic Spain", *The Visigoths. Studies in Culture and Society*, Leiden *et al.* 1999, 138) analyzes hagiographic sources such as the *Passio Mantii*, which is marked by a Christian perception of Judaism; however, its propagandistic purpose should not be taken as evidence for Jewish proselytism. In view of 7th-century political pressures Jewish landowners will hardly have threatened Christian slaves with death if they refused circumcision. With the exception of the Hasmonean kings in 1st-century B.C. Idumaea, where force was applied in entirely different circumstances, there is no evidence in Jewish tradition for forced circumcision. Therefore, hagiographic sources alone should not be taken as evicence for "Jewish mission". Recent scholarship does no longer subscribe to older theories of Jewish missionary activities; see Cohen, "Was Judaism in Antiquity a Missionary Religion?", *Jewish Assimilation, Acculturation, and Accomodation*, Lanham 1992, 14–23 and Goodman, *Mission and Conversion. Proselytizing in the Religious History of the Roman Empire*, Oxford 1994.

[537] See Albert, "*De Fide Catholica Contra Judaeos* d'Isidore de Séville", *REJ* 141 (1982), 302, and Roth, *Jews, Visigoths and Muslims in Medieval Spain*, Leiden *et al.* 1994, 237 note 22 for lacking evidence for Jewish mission in Visigothic Spain.

term *proselytus* in the past tense, giving no indication as to a possible contemporary significance.[538] By contrast, Judaism may still have exerted some attraction on Christians; in the 640s some laws threaten Christians who have themselves circumcised,[539] and Julian of Toledo also mentions a certain attraction retained by Judaism.[540] At the beginning of the century count Froga is said to have favoured Jews in Toledo, as reported in the letter of bishop Aurasius. It is therefore possible that Isidore had would-be proselytes in mind when he wrote his *de fide catholica*,[541] but he cannot have wanted to "combat Jewish missionary activity".[542]

There is no evidence for Jewish-Christian disputations in Visigothic Spain.[543] Such a controversy is mentioned by Shlomo ibn Verga in his work *Shevet Yehudah*, but this source from the early 16th century is doubtlessly influenced by the high and late medieval practice of public disputations. The discussion Gregory of Tours claims to have had with the Jew Priscus in Nogent in front of King Chilperic I in 580 or 581 cannot be taken as evidence for Visigothic Spain.[544] Severus of Minorca mentions a disputation between Christians and Jews in his letter; yet this discussion does not produce the desired result, since the

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[538] *Proselytus, id est advena et circumcisus qui miscebatur populo Dei* (*etym*. VII, 14, 10).

[539] *LV* XII, 2, 16; 3, 4 (MGH, LL, I, 424. 433).

[540] *Insultatio* (CCL 115, 245–249), esp. 245.

[541] García Moreno, *Los Judíos de la España Antigua*, Madrid 1993, 118f.: "… para evitar todo riesgo de judaización en las filas de los cristianos viejos y, tal vez, de los nuevos." This very last assumption is, however, unfounded, as indicated in the preceding analysis of Isidore's argument.

[542] King, *Law and Society in the Visigothic Kingdom*, Cambridge 1972, 138 note 1. See also Riché, *Éducation et culture dans l'occident barbare*, Paris 1962, 323: "Isidore compose un *Contra Judaeos* pour réfuter leur propagande."

[543] There may have been anti-Christian Latin writings composed by Jews, but these are not extant; see Posnanski, *Schiloh. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Messiaslehre*, Leipzig 1904, 303 and Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden* V, Leipzig 1909, 70. King Ervig passed laws against Jews who publicly or privately denigrated Christianity (*LV* XII, 3, 9; MGH, LL, I, 1, 436). It is possible that Julian of Toledo refers to written works when he complains about the influence Jews (are said to) have on Christians (*sext. aet.* I, 1; CCL 115, 149). This apologetic treatise may have been commissioned by the king in order to argue against Jewish works in which it was claimed that the Messiah had not yet come.

[544] Greg. Tur. *hist.* VI, 5 (MGH, SRM, I, 1, 268–271); see Rouche, "Les baptêmes forcés de juifs en Gaule mérovingienne et dans l'Empire d'Orient", *De l'antijudaïsme antique à l'antisémitisme contemporain*, Lille 1979, 105–124. Another discussion took place, perhaps between 750 and 760, in Pavia between magister Peter of Pisa and the Jew Lullus in the presence of the young Alcuin; cf. Alcuin's *ep.* 172 (MGH, Epp. IV, 285) and Blumenkranz, *Juifs et chrétiens dans le monde occidental 430–1096*, Paris/La Haye 1960, 68ff. and 162ff.

Christians prove unable to overcome their Jewish opponent by words, having to rely on heavenly assistance.[545] There is no evidence that medieval Jews were ever converted to Christianity by way of biblical exegesis.[546] It is possible that the negative results Christians experienced in their attempts to convert Jews in disputations led to an increase in the number of miracle stories "attesting" missionary success; in such stories the conversion of Jews was not presented as depending on the intellectual and argumentative skills of Christian disputants, but on God alone.[547]

According to some authors, bishop Aurasius of Toledo would have mentioned a public controversy with Jews in his letter to Froga; yet this reference is no clear hint at a verbal confrontation.[548] Isidore's argument is no indication either that the author sharpened his wit in controversies with contemporary Jews; this is true for all of Isidore's exegetical works.[549] The exchange of rhetorical questions and answers follows strictly traditional lines.[550] The remark … *et cum Ecclesia … de Scripturis disputant* is without any real background and contemporary context.[551]

Isidore got his information on Jews from patristic biblical commentaries and from works belonging to the literature *adversus Iudaeos*. The Jewish population of the province of *Baetica* was probably numerous, which was a result of the early and thorough Romanization of the region and of good lines of communication to other parts of the Roman empire.[552] Jews were active in different sectors of the economy, includ-

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[545] … *populus Christianus videns quia verbis superari non posset humanis, auxilium de caelo imploravit* (*ep. Sev.* 16, 3; Bradbury 96).

[546] Gregory of Tours reports the failure of such an attempt: *Haec et alia nobis dicentibus, numquam conpunctus est miser* (sc. *Iudaeus*) *ad credendum. Tunc rex, silenti illo, cum viderit eum his sermonibus non conpungi, … postulat ut … discederit* (*hist.* VI, 5; MGH, SRM, I, 1, 271). For the high middle ages see Schmitt, *La conversion d'Hermann le Juif*, Paris 2003, 15 and 177: Hermann of Cologne is not converted by theological argument or *rationes*, but by observing the practical example of pious Christians.

[547] Blumenkranz, "Juden und Jüdisches in christlichen Wundererzählungen", *ThZ* 10 (1954), 421.

[548] *Ecclesiam Dei non solum verberasti, sed etiam impugnando coram nos humiliasti* (*Misc. Wisig.* XVIII, 48). See Hernández Martín, "La España visigoda frente al problema de los judíos", *La Ciencia Tomista* 94 (1967), 670; Blumenkranz, *Juifs et chrétiens dans le monde occidental 430–1096*, Paris/La Haye 1960, 106.

[549] *quaest. in Gen.* 6, 6 (PL 83, 224).

[550] *quaest. in Lev.* 17 (PL 83, 335–340).

[551] *quaest. in I Reg.* 14, 6 (PL 83, 402).

[552] Fear, *Rome and Baetica. Urbanization in Southern Spain c. 50 BC-AD 150*, Oxford 1996;

ing agriculture[553] and trade.[554] They were integrated into economic and social life,[555] as indicated by conciliar decisions warning against close Jewish-Christian contacts in everyday life. It is remarkable that nothing of this is reflected in Isidore's theological attitude towards and appreciation of the Jews.[556]

This lack of interest in the culture of contemporary Jews corresponds to his failure to master Greek. Isidore could at least have tried to get hold of assistants who knew Greek, even though it has to be admitted that knowledge of Greek had been declining for centuries in the west.[557] However, Isidore does not seem to have made an effort to widen his competence in Greek; he may even have decided against studying that language. This may have been prompted by his opposition to Byzantium,[558] both for political and religious reasons; he resented the Byzantine occupation of parts of southern Spain and he was suspicious of alleged Byzantine heretical inclinations in the wake of the controversy of the three chapters. It is noteworthy that Isidore shows an anti-Byzantine disposition in the chapter on Justinian in his treatise *de viris illustribus*, which is not found in his sources.[559]

Haley, *Baetica Felix. People and Prosperity in Southern Spain from Caesar to Septimius Severus*, Austin 2003.

[553] González Salinero, "Los judíos y la gran propiedad en la Hispania tardoantigua. El reflejo de una realidad en la *Passio Mantii*", *Gerión* 16 (1998), 437–450.

[554] For the outstanding significance of trade for the economic activities of most Jewish communities in the 7th century cf. Retamero, "As Coins Go Home: Towns, Merchants, Bishops and Kings in Visigothic Hispania", *The Visigoths. From the Migration Period to the Seventh Century*, Woodbridge 1999, 275. See also Alonso Avila, "Aspectos económicos de la sociedad judía en la España visigoda", *Hispania Antiqua* 8 (1978), 231–255.

[555] Lotter, "Zur sozialen Hierarchie der Judenheit in Spätantike und Frühmittelalter", *Aschkenas* 13 (2003), 333–359.

[556] For these two different spheres in Gregory the Great see Markus, "The Jew as a Hermeneutic Device: The Inner Life of a Gregorian Topos", *Gregory the Great*, Notre Dame/London 1995, 2f.

[557] Domínguez del Val, "El helenismo de los escritores cristianos españoles en los siete primeros siglos", *CD* 181 (1968), 482. See Bartelink, "Pope Gregory the Great's Knowledge of Greek", *Gregory the Great*, Notre Dame/London 1995, 117–136 and Courcelles, *Les lettres grecques en Occident. De Macrobe à Cassiodore*, Paris ²1948.

[558] Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique*, Paris 1959/83, 850f.

[559] *Iustinianus imperator … condidit … rescriptum … adversus africanos episcopos* ⟨*Chalcedonensis synodi defensores perverso studio*⟩ (*vir. ill.* XVIII; Codoñer, 144; the negative characterization of the emperor is found only in three manuscripts). This negative view of Justinian is not found in Isidore's sources; cf. Madoz, "El concilio de Calcedonia en San Isidoro de Sevilla", *RET* 12 (1952), 197. Isidore also reports the anti-Byzantine rumour according to which bishop Licinianus of Cartagena would have been poisoned in Con-

The reluctance to transcend the orbit of Latin culture can also be detected in his approach to contemporary Judaism. He could have followed Jerome's example in seeking out Jewish exegetes or converts who could have provided him with more accurate information concerning Jewish feasts and customs. In the 9th century Agobard of Lyons tried to get hold of information on contemporary Jews and rabbinic literature, relying on the help of converts.[560] Since Isidore decided against learning Greek, this is all the more true for Hebrew, which is remarkable since he follows Jerome in considering Hebrew to be the mother of all other languages.[561] Since he regarded contemporary Judaism as spiritually barren,[562] he may have thought Hebrew to be a language of the past, possessing merely historical, antiquarian dignity. This hypothetical identification of *gens Iudaeorum* and *lingua Hebraica* may have induced him to leave aside any attempt to deal with the Hebrew version of the Bible. Isidore was content to reproduce encyclopaedic knowledge about Hebrew and some Hebrew words, relying on other sources. In keeping with his general intellectual disposition he did not contribute to an increase in or extension of existing knowledge. His horizon was mainly limited to Latin culture and tradition; probably no Christian in Visigothic Spain expected anything else. Yet this approach had a significant bearing on the force of his argument; he had to rely on translations, not being qualified to verify and solve linguistic problems on his own.

This refusal to gain independent access to Greek and Hebrew culture is in stark contrast to Isidore's use of ancient, "pagan" tradition. He may have felt justified in incorporating such material from classical and hellenistic culture by the great number of Christian authors who preceded him in doing this; what is more, he largely relied on anthologies where these traditions had been collected and ordered. By contrast, he could not rely on precedents for a possible use of contemporary Byzantine or rabbinic literature. This is an indication of the limits of Isidore's originality: he collected and systematized received knowledge, occasionally adding thoughts and interpretations of his own, but he did not prepare the ground for introducing new sources into intellectual

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stantinople (*vir. ill.* 29; Codoñer 151). See Fontaine, "Isidoro de Sevilla frente a la España bizantina", *Actas de la V Reunió d'Arqueologia Cristiana Hispànica*, Barcelona 2000, 29–40.

[560] This was a turning point in the history of anti-Jewish polemics (Parente, "La controversia tra Ebrei e Cristiani in Francia e in Spagna dal VI al IX secolo", *Gli ebrei nell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 26, 1980, 637 and 644f.).

[561] *etym.* I, 3, 4; IX, 1, 1 (Reydellet, 31); X, 191.

[562] *quaest. in Iud.* 4, 5 (PL 83, 383). See also *infra*, p. 151.

argument. For Judaism and Hebrew he entirely relied on Jerome and other authorities. In accordance with tradition he approved of using and studying "pagan" and heretical literature in order to facilitate an intellectual argument with learned heretics (and pagans, if there were any "educated" ones in his time, which is doubtful); this was the cultural pattern he had inherited from late antiquity. Since the Hebrew Bible and rabbinic literature did not belong to received tradition, he felt no need to turn to these sources, although this would have facilitated his argument against the Jews, at least if he had wanted to impress Jews at all. His approach was, however, well suited to the expectations and to the intellectual horizon of his Christian readers, and it was justified by the long tradition of literature *adversus Iudaeos*.

However, it is remarkable that in a few cases Isidore departed from this pattern. The most notable one is the reference to the Jewish king in the east. A less important deviation from the traditional line of argument is his occasional use of New Testament prooftexts, including letters of St Paul,[563] which can, however, also be found in other authors who wrote *adversus Iudaeos*, thus giving evidence that they, like Isidore, wrote mainly, if not exclusively, for Christians. Another 7th-century author, Julian of Toledo, provides an instructive parallel, saying that if the Jews cannot be shaken by his argument (something he does not really expect to happen) at least Christians will benefit from his anti-Jewish exposition.[564]

An interesting hint at the reception of Isidore's treatise against the Jews by contemporaries is found in the brief pertaining statements by Braulio and Ildefonse. The latter refers to Isidore's works as being directed against the wickedness of the Jews.[565] Braulio of Zaragoza is more specific, describing Isidore's method of proving Catholic faith by testimonies taken from the law and the prophets.[566] Both authors record the dedication of the treatise, although this has no bearing on Isidore's argument.[567] It is remarkable that Braulio credits Isidore

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[563] According to Blumenkranz (*Die Judenpredigt Augustins*, Basel 1946, 203) Jews especially resented the apostle of the gentiles, therefore writings destined for missionary propaganda among Jews as a rule dispensed with Pauline quotations.

[564] *sext. aet.* I, 2 (CCL 115, 149f.).

[565] Ild. Tol. *vir. ill.* VIII (Codoñer, 128).

[566] *Renotatio* (Lynch/Galindo 358; Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville. Genèse et originalité de la culture hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*, Turnhout 2000, 432); *abbreviatio*: Anspach, Taionis et Isidori nova fragmenta et opera, 59. For Fontaine's emendation cf. *supra*, p. 42, n. 46.

[567] Braulio also mentions the addressees of Isidore's other works. Ildefonse names Braulio and Sisebut, but not Fulgentius.

with explaining the whole Catholic faith, something the author himself does not claim; in his dedicatory letter he merely declares to have collected "something" (*quaedam*). This is an indication that the treatise was soon perceived as a kind of *summa contra Iudaeos*, which may have met the intentions of the author, who had, however, not said so explicitly.

In many of his works Isidore stressed the importance of Christian education; in discussing repentance and study he pointed to the significance of personal, internal religious life. In this connection, the spiritual life of every Christian appears as a continuous process of growth and renewal,[568] which was to be backed institutionally by monastic and cathedral schools, but also by sermons preached by the clergy. This notion of a process of continuous spiritual advance hardly corresponds to drastic measures such as forced conversions; at least Isidore's initiative in matters of religious force is hardly imaginable, which does not preclude, however, the possibility of his initial consent to Sisebut's measures.

Isidore showed great interest in the origins of words and institutions. He contrasted things of the present to a normative past; a clarification of the origins was considered to be helpful for ordering and shaping contemporary society. According to Braulio, Isidore's efforts were directed *ad restauranda antiquorum monumenta*.[569] From this perspective, his discussion of Jews and Judaism appears to be an exposition of the *origines Iudaeorum*. In his treatise *de fide catholica* Isidore discusses the origins of the church as the *verus Israel* in the Old Testament. According to his notion of salvation history, Old Testament patriarchs and prophets typologically point to the coming of Christ; in a way they are Christians *avant la lettre*.[570] The Jews of the present, living after the incarnation of Christ, are seen as apostates, who only through baptism can return to their "original" faith. This conversion is, however, presented clearly as an eschatological event; Isidore's overall approach to history and Visi-

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[568] See especially the second book of the *sententiae*, Isidore's "spiritual testament" (Fontaine, "Hispania II", *RAC* 15, 1991, 678). The description of the internal growth of a Christian is marked by a tradition going back to Augustine (*confessiones*) and Gregory the Great (*regula pastoralis* and *moralia in Iob*).

[569] *Renotatio* (Lynch/Galindo, 358; Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville. Genèse et originalité de la culture hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*, Turnhout 2000, 433). See Fontaine, "Isidor von Sevilla", *RAC* 18 (1998), 1018.

[570] Tertullian had developed the notion of an *anima naturaliter christiana* (*apol.* 17, 6; CCL 1, 117), however, not with reference to figures from the Old Testament.

gothic society gives no indication that he expected the end of the world to be close at hand.

If the assumption were true that *de fide catholica* was written shortly after the forced conversions, Isidore seems to have hoped that the "problem" of the "new Christians" would evaporate with the passage of time, mainly by way of Christian education, which was to be accomplished by Catholic clergy, and possibly also by laity such as Florentina and her nuns. With the exception of the canon of the 3rd council of Seville, Isidore never seems to have advocated the use of force in matters of religion,[571] trusting rather in the power and effectiveness of Christian education.[572]

If Isidore had conversion in mind, it is not conversion of Jews to Christianity, but conversion of baptized Christians, whose faith had to be strengthened in order to lead them to a more Christian way of life. According to Fontaine, *de fide catholica* is one of his works written to stabilize the church and Christian society.[573] In different periods theologians repeatedly warned Christians against discussing theological problems with Jews, because the latter were thought to confuse the ordinary faithful with their arguments.[574] It is conceivable that Isidore wrote a treatise such as *de fide catholica* for laypeople in order to strengthen their faith and render them "immune" against possible (if improbable) Jewish "attacks", which were more feared by churchmen than actually undertaken by Jews. He gives no indication that he expected the eschatological conversion of the Jews to be a result of Christian mission or education.[575] This was different in earlier works written against the Jews, such as the pseudo-Cyprianic sermon *adversus Iudaeos*.[576]

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[571] See *infra*, p. 220.

[572] This "solution" may be termed "rational", although Isidore does not seem to have had much contact with Jewish contemporaries or even converts. It should be remembered that his argument will have appeared rather unconvincing and therefore "irrational" in Jewish eyes. See Hillgarth, "Isidorian Studies 1976–1985", *Studi medievali* 31 (1991), 947: "… in the *de fide catholica*, which, if not a mere dossier of Old Textament (sic) quotations, could have been directed towards a rational solution to the problem of the Jewish population in Spain, as opposed to that of force championed by King Sisebut."

[573] Fontaine "Isidor von Sevilla", *LdMA* 5 (1991), 678.

[574] Jerome, *in Tit.* 3, *ad v.* 9 (PL 26, 595f.). For the high middle ages cf. Fulbert of Chartres, *tractatus contra Iudaeos* 2 (PL 141, 313) and the letter of Pope Gregory IX to German bishops written in 1233 (MGH, Epp. saec. XIII, 1, nr. 515, p. 415).

[575] Similarly Aug. *civ. Dei* XX, 29 (CCL 48, 752f.) and *s.* 122, 5 (PL 38, 683).

[576] Horbury, "The Purpose of Pseudo-Cyprian: *Adversus Iudaeos*", *Studia Patristica* 18/3, Kalamazoo/Leuven 1989, 306. By contrast, Origen expects the Jews rather to convert

The purpose of Isidore's treatise should be seen in very much the same light as Blumenkranz' solution to the problem of Augustine's intentions regarding his *tractatus adversus Iudaeos*; Blumenkranz postulated three aims: inner-Christian education, fight against heretics, indirect fight against and for the Jews.[577] However, the second element is hardly visible in Isidore; it is barely touched upon in the christological passages of the first book. At the beginning of the middle ages heretics had been replaced by Jews in that respect. Especially important is Blumenkranz' assessment that Augustine's treatise (and by implication all late antique literature of the same kind) was not meant to serve direct missionary endeavours. If "real" Jews were thought of at all, it was rather as potential partners in theological discussions, whose Christian participants had to be prepared for Jewish arguments that had traditionally been discussed by church fathers, the main aim in this respect being to provide them with counterarguments by which they could convince rather themselves than the Jews.

Both anti-Jewish theological writings and anti-Jewish legislation seem to have served mainly the same purpose: the faith of Christians was to be strengthened by projecting an image constructed from a Christian perspective; the Jews were to be relegated to a theologically and legally inferior position, which was in accordance with the Augustinian theory of Jewish witness. However, in 7th-century Spain most laws dealing with "the Jews" did not refer to those Jews who still professed their ancestral faith (which would be necessary for the latter theory) but to baptized Jews, i.e. "new Christians".

Shortly after Isidore's death his treatise against the Jews was incorporated into collections of sermons; it was also translated into other languages. Until the later middle ages the manuscript tradition is very rich, which is due to the fact that the work soon acquired the standing of an authoritative collection of testimonies. It was used as an anthology which provided readers with an array of biblical prooftexts that could be used in disputations and confrontations, if real or imagined, if written or oral, with Jews. The inclusion of the treatise in collections of sermons is an indication that it was still used as a work for Christians, in keeping with Isidore's intentions as pointed out in the preceding analysis. Like the *Etymologies* and the *quaestiones in Vetus Testamentum*

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at the end of times.

[577] Blumenkranz, *Die Judenpredigt Augustins*, Basel 1946, 204.

the treatise *de fide catholica* was used for reference and as a handbook.[578] Isidore's great renown as a scholar certainly enhanced the standing of these theological texts in the eyes of later preachers.

There is no reason to assume that Isidore's treatise against the Jews contributed to a deterioration of their status in Visigothic Spain after the forced baptisms; his quite conventional argument will rather have calmed the situation. This also applies to his treatise *de natura rerum*, which was probably written around the same time. In the very few cases where the author discusses Jews from the perspective of Christian salvation history in this work his image of the Jews is rather traditional, certainly not more hostile than other patristic works mentioning and discussing Jews. When Isidore explains the allegorical significance of the solar eclipse at the crucifixion, he mentions the error of the Jews in not recognizing Christ only in passing; his attention is clearly focussed on the effects for salvation history, namely the calling of the gentiles to faith and salvation, which is the common thread running through his entire œuvre, constituting a link also to the argument in *de fide catholica*.[579]

In conclusion, it is safe to assume that Isidore's treatise against the Jews was written for Catholic Christians, as were his other works. His main intention was to strengthen the faith of people who had already accepted the basic tenets of Catholicism, which had recently been promoted to the status of the very foundation of Gothic ("national") identity, even though this often was more wishful thinking than reality.[580] Precisely for this reason the christianization of the entire (Christian) population, who were already nominal Catholics, was all the more important. Judaism was outside the range of this enterprise; Isidore shows no wish to make contact with Jewish contemporaries or to understand their way of thinking. Therefore his argument was unsuitable for Christian mission among Jews, which was not on top of the ecclesiastical agenda anyway. On the long run, the author cannot have failed to realize that his argument was unlikely to convince Jews, even if this

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[578] For the use of the *quaestiones* as a handbook cf. Châtillon, "Isidore et Origène: recherches sur les sources et l'influence des *Quaestiones in Vetus Testamentum* d'Isidore de Séville", *Mélanges André Robert*, Paris 1957, 541.

[579] *nat. rer.* 20, 3 (Fontaine, 251, 23–29).

[580] Sotomayor, "Penetración de la Iglesia en los medios rurales en la España tardorromana y visigoda", *Cristianizzazione ed organizzazione ecclesiastica delle campagne nell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 28 (1982), 639–683; Hillgarth, "Popular Religion in Visigothic Spain", *Visigothic Spain. New Approaches*, Oxford 1980, 3–60.

was not yet clear to him at the time of writing. However, unlike other works he did not revise this treatise by writing a second version; this failure to change and adapt the argument to make it more convincing or palatable to Jews is another indication that the author did not care for mission among them. Therefore it is highly unlikely that he should have intended his work to be used for a *provocatio fidei ratione*, which he considers to be the suitable strategy as regards the Jews in his *History of the Goths*.[581]

Isidore's treatise against the Jews was rather part of his pastoral care for his Christian flock. Preaching was one of the primary tasks of bishops and priests in Visigothic Spain,[582] it was one of the essential forms of communication whereby the faithful could be instructed and educated. The bulk of Isidore's literary production is devoted to a comprehensive exposition of the vast body of theological and secular learning which provided the basis of such an education, either directly through reading and study by clergy and laypeople or indirectly by way of preaching. Gregory the Great's *moralia in Iob* provide an interesting parallel; they were written first and foremost for *viri sancti*, i.e. monks, but second also for *praedicatores*, and finally also for laypeople, which means that basically all those who devoted their lives to a spiritual *militia Christi* were on the author's mind.[583]

The conciliar canons adopted at assemblies presided over by Isidore also show his efforts to consolidate orthodox teaching. All these endeavours were confined to Catholic Christians, including those who had recently been brought to faith, either voluntarily (the Goths) or by force (baptized Jews).[584] Sermons preached against Jews or Judaizers, which are, however, not attested in Visigothic Spain, could only be directed

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[581] Cf. *infra*, chapter 4.1., esp. p. 214 ff.

[582] According to Isidore not only bishops, but also priests were commissioned to preach (*eccl. off.* II, 7, 2; CCL 113, 65). He refers to the bishop as *doctor* (*sent.* III, 36, 1. 2; CCL 111, 276). According to the acts of the council of Valencia (546) some people are said to have been brought to faith by the sermons of bishops (*c.* 1; Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica IV, 314). In *de fide catholica* Isidore uses the phrase *apostoli atque doctores* (*fid. cath.* II, 24, 6; PL 83, 531), thus outlining the tradition of which he considers himself to be a part.

[583] Fontaine, "Augustin, Grégoire et Isidore. Esquisse d'une recherche sur le style des Moralia in Iob", *Grégoire le Grand*, Paris 1986, 502.

[584] His treatise against the Jews can, however, hardly have been intended to prevent "new Christians", who had been baptized by force, from reverting to their ancestral faith, as proposed by Genot-Bismuth, "L'Argument de l'histoire dans la tradition espagnole de polémique judéo-chrétienne d'Isidore de Séville à Isaac Abravanel et Abraham Zacuto", *From Iberia to Diaspora*, Leiden *et al.* 1999, 200 note 12.

at Christians.[585] Isidore himself declares in the dedicatory letter that he
wrote his treatise to confirm the faith (i.e. of Christians) and to prove
the ignorance of the Jews (in the eyes of Christians). His argument is
well suited to these intentions, firmly based on a Christian understand-
ing of Judaism, which provides a negative foil for his exposition. He is
not interested in winning new converts among the Jews. For this reason
he addresses neither the question of preaching nor the catechumenate
in the second book; he rather wants to spread the exegetical tradition
among the faithful in order to propagate Catholic faith as the basis for
the new identity of the *gens Gothorum*. Since there is no reference what-
soever to problems brought about by Sisebut's forced baptisms (one
should also note that the king is not mentioned alongside Florentina
in the dedicatory letter), it is rather likely that Isidore wrote his work
before the royal decree ordering the general conversion of the Jews was
passed, perhaps—but not necessarily—after the two initial anti-Jewish
laws enacted by the king.[586]

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[585] Fontaine, "Isidore de Séville pédagogue et théoricien de l'exégèse", *Stimuli. Exegese
und ihre Hermeneutik in Antike und Christentum*, Münster 1996, 433 (referring to Isidore's
de fide catholica): "Ce dossier de citations et d'exégèse polémique, d'un ton souvent
oratoire, s'apparente probablement par sa pensée et sa forme à ses sources patristiques
du IVᵉ siècle, mais aussi aux sermons prononcés contre le judaïsme dans l'Espagne
contemporaine."

[586] For dating the treatise before the decree ordering general conversion see González
Salinero, *Las conversiones forzosas de los judíos en el reino visigodo*, Rome 2000, 121f., who
bases his argument not only on the structure of the work, but also on the assumption
that it is possible to date both the treatise and Sisebut's law with certainty into the years
614/15 and 616, respectively.

ISIDORE'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS JUDAISM

3.1. *A stereotypical image*

Isidore reproduces the main patristic stereotypes that had been applied to the Jews for centuries. They are described as ungrateful children,[1] blind,[2] hard of heart, and ignorant.[3] On occasion he even adds anti-Jewish comments in passages that are devoted to a discussion of fairly "neutral" topics.[4] The alleged unfaithfulness of the Jews is addressed right at the beginning of the first chapter of the first book.[5] Judaism is not discussed on its own terms; it is presented exclusively as a negation of Christianity. As a rule, the Jews are said to be incapable of understanding the scriptures because they lack Christ as the one and only appropriate key. This basic hermeneutical presupposition is only left aside for polemical purposes.[6] The Jews are even blamed for actions during Christ's passion which were done by the Romans according to the gospels.[7] This stereotypical notion of Jews provides the basis for conceiving them as a single person, upon whom collective guilt has

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[1] *fid. cath*. I, 18, 3 (PL 83, 477), referring to Is. 1, 2f.

[2] *fid. cath*. I, 18, 4 (PL 83, 477).

[3] *fid. cath*. I, 18, 3 (PL 83, 477).

[4] E.g. *fid. cath*. I, 53, 3 (PL 83, 492; following Is. 33, 10f.). See also *fid. cath*. II, 2, 10 (PL 83, 505, following Hab. 2, 3), where the prooftext is not interpreted with a view to the heading of the chapter, but with reference to the alleged unfaithfulness of the Jews.

[5] *fid. cath*. I, 1 (PL 83, 449). The *infidelium Iudaeorum imperitia⟨m⟩* is mentioned already in the dedicatory letter.

[6] *Sed ideo ista non intelligere se fingunt, quia sacrilegio suo haec impleta cognoscunt* (*fid. cath*. I, 1, 2; PL 83, 449).

[7] *Sed hoc de Christi praedictum est passione, qui a populo Iudaeorum clavis in ligno confixus est* (*fid. cath*. I, 36, 2; PL 83, 485). Cf. Mt. 27, 27–29 (the Roman *milites praesidis* impose a crown of thorns on Christ's head) and *fid. cath*. II, 10, 7 (PL 83, 517). Isidore also charges the Jews with presenting vinegar to Christ, something done likewise by Roman soldiers (*fid. cath*. I, 39, 2; PL 83, 486). See Jordan, "The Last Tormentor of Christ. An Image of the Jew in Ancient and Medieval Exegesis, Art and Drama", *JQR* 78 (1987), 21–47.

supposedly been placed.[8] The only way to be cleansed from this alleged guilt is the acceptance of Christian faith.

However, in other, less polemical passages Isidore does mention the participation of the Romans in Christ's passion.[9] Without naming them explicitly, he mentions "persecutors" in the *allegoriae* who are distinct from the Jews.[10] In the *quaestiones* he names Pilate as the one who passed judgement on Jesus.[11] By contrast, Ildefonse of Toledo interprets Pilate's washing of hands as a purification of the gentiles, who are cleansed from any guilt as regards Christ's death, which is exclusively blamed on the Jews;[12] Gregory the Great again does mention the role of the Romans in Christ's passion.[13]

Isidore presents Judas as the archetype of all Jews, who have allegedly betrayed Jesus; the only way to be freed from this guilt is thought to be faith in Christ.[14] This entirely Christian concept of Judaism is also reflected in his total ignorance of contemporary, postbiblical Jewish belief and practice. Isidore's ignorance of these matters becomes clear when he assumes that Jews still sacrifice the pascal lamb.[15] He presupposes an identity of Christian dogma and Jewish expecations, e.g. as regards the Messiah.[16]

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[8] *fid. cath.* I, 42, 2 (PL 83, 487).

[9] *fid. cath.* I, 19, 1 (PL 83, 477). Cf. also *all.* 245 (PL 83, 129).

[10] *all.* 45 (PL 83, 107). This statement is much closer to the report of the New Testament.

[11] *quaest. in Gen.* 31, 12 (PL 83, 278).

[12] *cogn. bapt.* 45 (Campos Ruiz, 285). The tendency to acquit the Romans of any responsibility is already visible in the gospels; cf. Speyer, "Toleranz und Intoleranz in der alten Kirche", *Christentum und Toleranz*, Darmstadt 1996, 97 note 35.

[13] *moral.* VI, 20, 35 (CCL 143, 309). Cf. also XXVII, 26, 50 (CCL 143 B, 1371) and XXVII, 27, 51 (1372).

[14] *fid. cath.* I, 21, 2 (PL 83, 479).

[15] *fid. cath.* II, 28, 4 (PL 83, 538). For the suspension of this custom see de Lange, *Origen and the Jews*, Cambridge 1976, 168f. note 18. Jerome knew the reason for this change: … *quia haec absque templo fieri lege prohibentur* (*ep.* 52, 10, 3; CSEL 54, 432). Only the Samaritans continued to observe this practice; since Isidore knew the difference between Jews and Samaritans it is unclear whether he consciously ascribed Samaritan rites to Jews; cf. Albert, "*De Fide Catholica Contra Judaeos* d'Isidore de Séville", *REJ* 141 (1982), 296. However, *etym.* VIII, 4, 4 he seems to confuse Samaritans and Sadducees. When describing Jewish feasts *etym.* VI, 18, 9–12 he uses the past tense throughout, creating the false impression that they are no longer celebrated; only the Jewish calender is explained in the present tense.

[16] *fid. cath.* I, 5, 11 (PL 83, 462). However, he knows that the Jews do not ecpect the Messiah to die (*fid. cath.* I, 44, 3; PL 83, 488). Unlike Isidore Amolo of Lyons (9th century) knew that Jews expect two different messianic figures; cf. Albert, "Adversus

Supposedly the Jews are without a proper leader; therefore they fail to live up to their mission.[17] Groups without a person in authority contradict the Augustinian idea of order; Isidore himself took action against the Syrian bishop Gregory at the 2nd council of Seville in 619, who belonged to a group called *acephali*, this name being explained by the fact that nobody knew who had established their doctrine.[18] The incapacity to name a founder or to place oneself inside a tradition is clearly viewed negatively, therefore it is telling that Isidore places the Jews precisely into this category by blaming them for not having a leader.

The alleged incapacity of the Jews to fulfill their mission in the economy of salvation refers to their character as God's people. They are thought to have completed their task insofar as they have transmitted faith in pre-Christian times, providing the basis for the conversion of the gentiles.[19] The alleged failure of the Jews started after the coming of Christ, when they are said to have apostatized from the faith they had been guarding previously.[20] The root of the alleged Jewish misbehaviour is their *superbia*, rebellion against God, which would have led to their blindness and hardness of heart.[21] They are charged with *impietas erroris*[22] and *deflenda dementia*.[23]

One of the classical anti-Jewish labels is the allegation that Jews are a carnal people.[24] This is discussed in detail in the second book of *de fide catholica* in the context of the cultic differences and regarding the interpretation of ritual law. The allegation of carnality is even directed at the Old Testament as such, in order to claim that from the beginning a spiritual testament had been envisaged.[25] Jews are

Iudaeos in the Carolingian Empire", *Contra Iudaeos. Ancient and Medieval Polemics between Christians and Jews*, Tübingen 1996, 138f.

[17] *fid. cath.* I, 19, 2 (PL 83, 478).

[18] *etym.* VIII, 5, 66.

[19] *fid. cath.* II, 2, 5 (PL 83, 504).

[20] *fid. cath.* I, 19 (PL 83, 477f.).

[21] *Iustum humilemque gentium populum successisse in locum quem superba plebs Iudaeorum perdiderat* (*fid. cath.* II, 8, 2; PL 83, 514). The ruin of the earthly Jerusalem is also presented as a punishment for the *superbia* of its inhabitants (*fid. cath.* II, 12, 5; PL 83, 518).

[22] *fid. cath.* II, 22, 2 (PL 83, 530).

[23] *fid. cath.* II, 28, 1 (PL 83, 536).

[24] *fid. cath.* II, 1, 11 (PL 83, 502); cf. *all.* 176 (PL 83, 121).

[25] *fid. cath.* II, 14, 1 (PL 83, 520). Cf. also *etym.* VI, 1, 1.

denied any transcendent religiosity;[26] their eschatological conversion is interpreted as an ascent *a carnali terrenaque spe ad promissa caelestia*.[27]

The allegation of Jewish blindness can already be found in the New Testament, coupled with the hint that Christ is the only way to overcome it.[28] It is noteworthy that conversion is presented as the only escape. The Jews are blamed for blindness, first for not accepting Jesus as the Messiah and second for refusing to follow spiritual exegesis on Christian terms.[29] Because of their alleged crimes God is said to have sealed their eyes, therefore they cannot understand the scriptures any longer.[30] It should be noted that this necessitates the conclusion that it was God who brought about the blindness of the Jews.[31] However, Isidore fails to eloborate this thought any further. He is also inconsistent on the point whether the alleged apostasy of the Jews occurred only at their refusal to acknowledge Jesus as the Christ or even earlier; this latter conclusion is implied in his interpretation of the episode of the golden calf at Mount Sinai, where he claims that Moses veiled his head when he descended from the mountain in order to signify the incapacity of the Jews to understand the law "because of their blindness".[32] This interpretation means that the Jews were never in a position to understand the Bible correctly, i.e. spiritually.

Theological dialogue with the Jews is therefore thought impossible.[33] Isidore even blames Jewish scholars for misleading the people.[34] The monotheistic centralization of cult in Jerusalem is not praised but criticized as particularism, which is contrasted to the worldwide expansion

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[26] *fid. cath.* II, 8, 1 (PL 83, 513). For the alleged Jewish failure of transcendence in Augustine and Gregory the Great see Markus, "The Jew as a Hermeneutic Device: The Inner Life of a Gregorian Topos", *Gregory the Great*, Notre Dame/London 1995, 7.

[27] *fid. cath.* II, 5, 9 (PL 83, 510); *fid. cath.* II, 13, 4 (PL 83, 519): … *ipsa terrena … Iudaeorum spe.* See also Jerome, referring to the spiritual understanding of scripture (*in Es.* I, 3; VetLat 23, 145 f.).

[28] 2 Cor. 3, 14–16.

[29] For the supposedly superficial understanding of scripture on the part of the Jews see also Orig. *c. Cels.* II, 4 (SC 132, 290) and Jerome, *ep.* 129, 6 (CSEL 56/1, 173).

[30] *fid. cath.* II, 21, 2 (PL 83, 529). There are some parallels to Isidore's views regarding God's hardening the hearts of sinners as punishment for their crimes (*sent.* II, 19, 5; CCL 111, 134).

[31] Against Cazier, who claims that according to Isidore the blindness of the Jews is a voluntary decision ("un aveuglement qu'il juge volontaire"); cf. Cazier, *Isidore de Séville et la naissance de l'Espagne catholique*, Paris 1994, 105.

[32] *Prae caecitatis caligine* (*fid. cath.* II, 21, 3; PL 83, 529).

[33] *fid. cath.* II, 6, 6. 9 (PL 83, 511. 512).

[34] Is. 29, 21 (*fid. cath.* II, 6, 6; PL 83, 511).

of Christianity among the gentiles.[35] This blatant neglect of the long tradition of synagogue service can only have appeared compelling to people who from the outset are positively disposed towards his argument.

From patristic tradition Isidore got the notion that Old Testament law was only given for a certain period. This is contradicted by a second line of thought according to which the law was intended for spiritual interpretation from the beginning. The former theory is in accordance with the ancient notion of the *lex naturalis*, which would have preceded the ritual law of Moses, as stated by Isidore in the *quaestiones*.[36] The law of Moses, the "Jewish law", is therefore temporally limited first by its being given on Mount Sinai and second by the incarnation of Christ and baptism. The old covenant is thought to be rendered obsolete, superseded in the course of the progress of salvation history.[37] On the other hand, Isidore does not deny elsewhere that the gospel presupposes the existence of the "law", which still gives the latter a certain "historical" significance.[38]

Following Christian presuppositions, Isidore considers Jewish feasts, laws and customs as sacraments,[39] which have to be regarded as signs pointing to Christian truth. While the old covenant and its signs are supposed to be carnal, the new one is claimed to be spiritual.[40] In this context Isidore takes up the notion of a change (*mutatio*) of the Old Testament, which was central to Augustine.[41] It is important that the

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[35] *fid. cath.* II, 1, 11 (PL 83, 502).

[36] *quaest. in Gen.* 19, 3 (PL 83, 252). The assumption of the existence of a natural law makes Job a type of every Christian (*fid. cath.* I, 61, 7; PL 83, 498).

[37] *fid. cath.* II, 14, 1 (PL 83, 520). On the idea of progress cf. Kinzig, *Novitas Christiana. Die Idee des Fortschritts in der Alten Kirche bis Eusebius*, Göttingen 1994; Paul M. Blowers, "Maximus the Confessor, Gregory of Nyssa and the Concept of 'Perpetual Progress'", *VC* 46 (1992), 151–171; Speigl, "Herkommen und Fortschritt im Christentum nach Tertullian", *Pietas*, Münster 1980, 165–178.

[38] *eccl. off.* I, 11, 2 (CCL 113, 9f.).

[39] *fid. cath.* II, 14, 5 (PL 83, 521). For Augustine's "prophetic" interpretation of Jewish sacraments see Blumenkranz, *Die Judenpredigt Augustins*, Basel 1946, 132–134. See also Greg. Mag. *ep.* 13, 1 (CCL 140 A, 992).

[40] Jer. 31, 33 (*fid. cath.* II, 14, 6; PL 83, 521) The same thought is expressed *etym.* VI, 19, 58, based on Jerome, *c. Joannem Hierosolymitanum* 28 (PL 23, 380); cf. Carpin, *Il battesimo in Isidoro di Siviglia*, Bologna 1984, 77. See also *fid. cath.* II, 14, 6 (PL 83, 521).

[41] According to Christian understanding, the progress of salvation history implied a *mutatio*. The Jews were blamed for refusing to acknowledge this point; cf. the pseudo-Augustinian *altercatio Ecclesiae et Synagogae* (CCL 69 A, 29), where the church attacks the synagogue as follows: *Mutare te non potes, semper negas et fallis*. This idea of change is a *leitmotiv* in Augustine's *adversus Iudaeos*; in the third chapter he explains the conditions of

essence of prophecy is said to remain unchanged, only the hermeneuti-
cal framework is different.[42] When this new understanding was applied
to the laws of the Old Testament, circumcision was regarded as a
cleansing of the heart, and the sabbath appeared not as rest from man-
ual labour, but as an avoidance of sin. Christian sacraments are pre-
sented as corresponding to Jewish rites and celebrations.[43] The latter
comprise temple sacrifice, circumcision, dietary laws and the sabbath.
Because of the difficulty to find appropriate typological interpretations
for feasts prescribed in the Old Testament these are discussed very
briefly in a summary at the very end of the treatise.[44]

   The tradition of allegorical interpretation of biblical commandments
goes back to hellenistic Judaism; in order to construct an antithetical
opposition, these roots were denied in patristic literature, claiming the
spiritual aspect entirely for Christianity.[45] Also in Isidore the sabbath is
entirely spiritualized,[46] being interpreted as a reference to the future life
of rest in the kingdom of heaven.[47] This entails a systematic problem,
since nine out of ten commandments of the decalogue are said to
retain their literal significance without *mutatio*; just the commandment
to observe the sabbath is claimed for spiritual understanding only; yet
Isidore fails to give a reason for this exception.[48] All attempts to justify
the *mutatio* of this commandment remain contradictory.[49] In addition, it
might be asked why there should be a commandment at all if Christ

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this *mutatio*, which is linked with the category of the appropriate time (*kairos*). Tertullian
expresses this notion by the term *reformatio*; cf. *adv. Iud.* 2, 9 (Tränkle, 6: *reformavit*). For
Isidore's reception of the Augustinian notion cf. *quaest. in I Reg.* 1, 5 (PL 83, 392). This
mutatio happens at a predestined point of time (*quaest. in I Reg.* 2, 4; PL 83, 394). For
Origen the conversion to the kingdom of heaven, i.e. to Christianity, is based on a
conversion (*metanoia*, i.e. *mutatio*) to a spiritual understanding of scripture; cf. *comm. in
Mt.* X, 14 (GCS Orig. 10, 17f.).
   [42] *quaest. in Gen.* 22, 5 (PL 83, 255).
   [43] *fid. cath.* II, 19, 1 (PL 83, 528). Cf. Aug. *adv. Iud.* VI (PL 42, 56).
   [44] *fid. cath.* II, 28, 4 (PL 83, 538). For a very cursory treatment of the New Moon in
the *differentiae* cf. *dif.* II, 33, 125 (PL 83, 89).
   [45] Blumenkranz, *Die Judenpredigt Augustins*, Basel 1946, 138. For Isidore's treatment see
fid. cath. II, 15, 1; II, 21, 1 (PL 83, 522. 529).
   [46] *fid. cath.* II, 15, 1; II, 28, 2 (PL 83, 522. 537).
   [47] *quaest. in Ex.* 29, 4–7 (PL 83, 301f.), following Aug. *civ. Dei* XXII, 30 (CCL 48,
865f.) and *adv. Iud.* II (PL 42, 53).
   [48] *quaest. in Ex.* 29, 16 (PL 83, 303).
   [49] If the commandments were a temptation, they should not be presented as a
concession (*fid. cath.* II, 15, 4; PL 83, 523).

will rule anyway in the world to come, which is thought to be the proper spiritual signification of the "commandment".

In the context of his discussion of the Jewish celebrations Isidore charges the Jews with licentiousness and luxurious feasting.[50] It is remarkable that this is the only place where Isidore makes this charge, which may be an indication of the reputation and moral integrity of the Visigothic Jewish communities.[51] However, it should be remembered that John Chrysostom hurled the most outrageous accusations against the Jews of Antioch, claiming that the synagogues were worse than theatres.[52] He was incensed precisely by the fact that the local Jewish communities enjoyed such a high standing that many Christians felt attracted to them, which gave rise to "Judaizing" tendencies. Isidore's reluctance on this point may rather be due to the fact that he did not fear any such tendencies among his congregation; therefore he saw no reason to vilify Jews and their synagogues.[53]

Unlike the sabbath, for which he claims a spiritual understanding from the outset, circumcision is said to have been meant for literal observation during a certain period of salvation history. This commandment was supposedly given in order to ensure the purity of Christ's descent from Abraham, avoiding any mixture with gentile nations.[54] Isidore seems to ignore the fact that other nations practiced

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[50] The feasts are even said to be observed in an arbitrary manner (*fid. cath.* II, 15, 7; PL 83, 523).

[51] Cazier, *Isidore de Séville et la naissance de l'Espagne catholique*, Paris 1994, 117. For the question of asceticism, which is not discussed by Isidore in this treatise, cf. Simon, "Christian Anti-Semitism", *Essential Papers on Judaism and Christianity in Conflict*, New York/London 1991, 143.

[52] Joh. Chrys. *adv. Iud.* I, 2; IV, 7; VII, 1; VIII, 1 (PG 48, 846f. 881. 915. 927f.). See Malingrey, "La controverse antijudaïque dans l'œuvre de Jean Chrysostome d'après le discours de *l'adversus Judeos*", *De l'antijudaïsme antique à l'antisémitisme contemporain*, Lille 1979, 87–104; Pradels/Brändle/Heimgartner, "The Sequence and Dating of the Series of John Chrysostom's Eight Discourses *Adversus Iudaeos*", *ZAC* 6 (2002), 90–124; Simon, "La polémique antijuive de saint Jean Chrysostome et le mouvement judaïsant d'Antioche", *Mélanges F. Cumont*, Brussels 1936, 403–421; Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews. Rhetoric and Reality in the Late Fourth Century*, Berkely *et al.* 1983; Wilken does not focus on demonstrating the attractivity of Judaism, he rather attributes Chrysostom's fierce rhetoric to internal concerns of the church.

[53] Since "Judaizing" tendencies were stronger in the east that in the Latin west, authors living and writing in the orient were much more critical of such trends. This is evident not only in John Chrysostom, but also in Jerome; cf. González Salinero, *Biblia y polémica antijudía en Jerónimo*, Madrid 2003, 177–202. 217f.

[54] *fid. cath.* II, 16, 1 (PL 83, 524f.).

circumcision as well.[55] After the incarnation of Christ, which brought about a *mutatio*, circumcision is allegedly to be observed "correctly" by cleansing one's heart.[56]

It seems that Isidore reverts to the model he applied to the sabbath when he discusses the sacrifices prescribed in the Old Testament, claiming that they should have been understood spiritually from the outset.[57] Allegedly they were also given as a test of the obedience of the Jews.[58] He takes his prooftexts from the extensive prophetic criticism of temple sacrifice contained in the Old Testament, but he ignores the fact that rabbinic Judaism also has traditions substituting sacrifice, namely by Torah study and charity.[59] However, he neither explains the supposed test in any way, nor does he give any indication as to how the sacrificial laws should be understood "properly", in a spiritual way, something he does indicate when explaining the *mutatio* of circumcision.

The dietary laws receive the same treatment as sabbath and sacrifices, they are said to have been intended for spiritual observation only. The biblical episode of Elijah accepting food from the gentile widow (1 Kings 17, 8–10) is taken as evidence that a literal observation was excluded from the outset.[60] These laws are interpreted allegorically according to the moral sense of scripture, for which no biblical proof can be adduced, so that Isidore fails by the standards of the method he chose himself. This spiritualization is claimed apodictically, and Isidore is unaware that it is in fact based on a tradition of hellenistic Judaism.[61]

In conclusion, Isidore applies two different models to the interpretation of Jewish "sacraments" and commandments in order to be able to "prove" that the old covenant has been replaced by a new one. These two models do not exclude each other, but everybody apply-

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[55] *etym.* XIX, 23, 7 (Rodríguez Pantoja, 197) he mentions only the Jews as practicing circumcision, even though he discusses the Arabs immediately afterwards. In the Vulgate version of Jer. 9, 25–26a also Egyptians, Edomites, Ammonites and Moabites are said to be circumcised; however, Isidore quotes only Jer. 9, 26b (*fid. cath.* II, 16, 5). Other authors do mention circumcision among other nations, e.g. Ambrose, *ep.* 69, 5f. (CSEL 82/2, 180f.) and Jerome, *in Jer.* II, 84, 2 (CCL 74, 101).

[56] *fid. cath.* II, 16, 2 (PL 83, 525). Old Testament prooftexts are Dtn. 30, 6 and Jer. 4, 4 (*fid. cath.* II, 16, 3; PL 83, 525). For spiritual circumcision see already Just. Mart. *dial.* 43, 2 (Marcovich, 140).

[57] *fid. cath.* II, 17, 3 (PL 83, 526).

[58] *fid. cath.* II, 17, 4 (PL 83, 526).

[59] See e.g. Avot de-Rabbi Nathan A 4 (ed. Schechter, 18. 21).

[60] *fid. cath.* II, 18, 1 (PL 83, 527).

[61] Ps.-Aristeas IX, 128–170 and Philo of Alexandria, *spec. leg.* XVII, 100–XXIV, 131.

ing critical judgement could have asked the question why no single paradigm underlies the supposedly correct interpretation. The majority of laws and commandments are said to have been meant for spiritual observance from the outset, but circumcision is an exception, having allegedly been intended for literal observation first, which would have changed after a *mutatio*. It has to be admitted that patristic tradition could not be brought into a coherent system, but the addressees of the treatise probably wanted no such system in the first place.

3.2. *The relationship between Jews and gentiles*

Isidore presents Judaism as a sign that points to Christian truth, even as an auxiliary construction within the economy of salvation, being meant to buttress Christianity.[62] This is only a partial parallel to Augustine's theory of Jewish witness, because it is not a testimony made in the present, but in the past, during the first covenant. He repeatedly mentions the two parts of God's people, the church of the gentiles and the church of the Jews; however, the latter is hardly discussed at all, which may suggest that the gentiles do not join but replace the Jews.[63] In some places the author expressly claims that the Jews have been deserted by God because of their alleged unfaithfulness.[64] Isidore calls upon the Jews to acknowledge their error and follow the gentiles by converting to Christ.[65] In the prologue to the second book, when he is about to discuss the calling of the gentiles, Isidore distinguishes between *Iudaica plebs* and *populus Novi Testamenti*.[66] The disparaging label *plebs* is meant to show that the Jews are no longer the people of God, it may also indicate that their social status is (or should be) inferior to that of the Christians.[67]

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[62] *fid. cath.* II, 12, 1 (PL 83, 517).

[63] *fid. cath.* II, 1, 10 (PL 83, 501); see also *fid. cath.* II, 27, 5 (PL 83, 536): *Interficitur enim Israel, succedit ex gentibus populus.* However, *etym.* VII, 2, 39 he mentions both parts in his discussion of the name of Christ.

[64] *fid. cath.* II, 1, 13 (PL 83, 502).

[65] *fid. cath.* II, 1, 15 (PL 83, 503).

[66] *fid. cath.* II, *prooemium* (PL 83, 499).

[67] For the negative connotation of *plebs* cf. *dif.* I, 330 (Codoñer, 234): *Plebs a populo eo distat, quod populus est generalis universitas civium cum senioribus, plebs autem humilis et abiecta.* However, it is only in opposition to *populus* that *plebs* is used in a depreciatory way. Elsewhere Isidore uses *plebs* as a neutral term: *Provocat enim propheta plebem gentium oblivisci populum suum* (*fid. cath.* II, 1, 4; PL 83, 500). For the difference between *populus*

Isidore acknowledges the historical priority of the Jews, who were the first to receive the Old Testament, before it came to the knowledge of gentiles.[68] He claims that the Jews were excluded from the community of God's people by Christ himself, but—as indicated above—he fails to discuss the existence of the *ecclesia ex circumcisione*.[69] Salvation is said to have gone over to the gentiles, who are conceived of as one people, which stresses the unity and catholicity of the gentile church.[70] The "catholic", worldwide range and diffusion of the church is closely linked with its gentile character. While the Jews are said to have lost their inheritance, the community of the gentiles, seen as a close union, is claimed to have replaced them.[71] The gentile church, spread over the entire earth, supposedly receives the Jewish inheritance and the promises made to Israel in Old Testament times. Consequently, the only way for the Jews to regain their inheritance is to accept Christian baptism.

Isidore takes great care to prove the dignity and superiority of the new covenant.[72] He even makes an attempt to demonstrate that the gentiles were called to the faith before the Jews, which provides the topic of a separate chapter.[73] A similar claim was made by the 4th-century Syriac author Aphraates, based on the fact that God's promise to Abraham concerning his numerous offspring was made prior to the introduction of circumcision.[74] Isidore presents faith as a capacity that was allegedly first found among gentiles. However, the prooftext adduced can only be used in the Septuagint version to substantiate this claim, which can hardly have convinced Jews.[75] Equally unconvincing is

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and *plebs* see Gschnitzer, "Volk, Nation, Nationalismus, Masse: Altertum", *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* 7 (1992), 159.

[68] *fid. cath.* II, 19, 2 (PL 83, 528).

[69] *fid. cath.* II, 7, 2 (PL 83, 512f.).

[70] *fid. cath.* II, 7, 3 (PL 83, 513).

[71] *fid. cath.* II, 8, 1 (PL 83, 513). The coming together of the *universitas gentium* had been stressed repeatedly as the characteristic feature of the Catholic church as distinct from Arian particularism (*fides gothica*); cf. Reccared's words at III Toledo (*Regis professio fidei*; Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 57f.). Leander of Seville resumed this thought in more general terms in his concluding sermon: *Ecclesia vero catholica, sicut per totum mundum tenditur, ita et omnium gentium societate constituitur* (ibid. 151).

[72] *fid. cath.* II, 14, 3 (PL 83, 520).

[73] *fid. cath.* II, 4 (PL 83, 508).

[74] *hom.* 16, 1. 4 (SC 359, 716. 723).

[75] *Quia prius gentes credere poterant in Christum, et postea Iudaei.* He wants to substantiate this claim by the following quotation: *Aethiopia praeveniet manus eius Deo* (Ps. 67, 32). This is an almost literal translation of the version found in the Septuagint. However, the

his claim that Christ deserted the Jews in favour of the gentiles because of their sins; the prooftext from Jeremiah merely says that the Jews turned away from God, without saying anything about God or a type of Christ turning away from them.[76]

Isidore's claim that the gentiles were the first to be called to faith is not only contradicted by his acknowledgement that the Jews were given the Old Testament first, but also by his statement that Christ turned away from the Jews to go over to the gentiles.[77] He may assume that the gentiles were called to faith first, but that they joined the people of God only later.[78] Apparently he thinks that because of his foreknowledge God foresaw that the gentiles would succeed to the Jews, replacing them in the economy of salvation.[79] Yet the author has great difficulty to prove the consistency of his claim that the gentiles received the first call; remarks in his other works (and also in *de fide catholica*) show that the opposite has a far better foundation in scripture.[80]

Isidore uses different models to describe the relationship of Jews and gentiles, which is sometimes presented as a replacement, but in a few cases also as a convergence, a reunion in the church. Throughout his treatise against the Jews he tries to prove the superiority of the gentiles, pointing to the first call to faith they allegedly received and to the supposedly greater dignity of the new covenant. From the perspective of the Catholic Visigoths the notion of the divine mission of the gentiles within the economy of salvation was on top of the agenda;[81] Isidore tries to substantiate this claim by asserting that this function of the nations has formed part of God's plan from the outset of salvation history.

Hebrew text does not have an equivalent of "to anticipate" (*praevenire*); it reads "to bring with haste", which is translated by Jerome as follows: *Aethiopia festinet dare manus Deo*.

[76] Jer. 14, 7f. (*fid. cath.* II, 7, 1; PL 83, 512).

[77] *fid. cath.* II, 7, 3 (PL 83, 513); see also *fid. cath.* II, 24, 4 (PL 83, 531): *populu⟨s⟩ gentium, fide postremum*. *etym.* VII, 6, 23 Isidore interprets the name *Heber* as *transitus*, referring to the alleged transition of God's grace from the Jews to the gentiles, by changing Jerome's interpretation found in the *liber interpretationis hebraicorum nominum*, Gen. E (CCL 72, 65, 19), who translates *Eber* as *transitor*. *etym.* VIII, 4, 2 Isidore understands this name as a call upon the Jews to move on from the worse to the better and to acknowledge the Christian truth to be found in their scriptures. In *de fide catholica* he does not adduce an anti-Jewish explanation of the name *Heber*.

[78] See the heading of chapter 8 of the 2nd book: *Quia, proiectis Iudaeis, gentes introierunt.*

[79] *fid. cath.* II, 8, 1 (PL 83, 513).

[80] *quaest. in Iud.* 2, 3 (PL 83, 381).

[81] See *infra*, p. 261.

3.3. *The present position of the Jews in the economy of salvation*

In keeping with patristic tradition, Isidore assumes that the Jews will
convert to Christianity at the end of times.[82] Israel continues to be
depositor and addressee of divine promises; a part of it will only convert
in the eschatological future.[83] This conversion is conceptualized as a
reunification of God's people; the new covenant is thought to have been
promised not only to the gentiles, but also to the Jews.[84]

However, in the meantime the community of the Jews is alleged to
have apostatized from God and to have turned away from salvation,
which is indissolubly linked with Christ after the incarnation.[85] As a
community and as a people the Jews are said to have been repudiated,
but as individuals they are given a chance to regain their inheritance by
accepting the *fides Christi*.[86] In spite of his harsh criticism, Isidore does
not assume that the Jews have been rejected forever; both Jews and gen-
tiles are called to faith; sometimes he even creates the impression as if
the Jews as a people continue to be addressees of divine promises.[87] The
Jews have become a *gens* among other *gentes*, they have lost their privi-
lege, being called to the faith of Christ as are all the other peoples.[88]

Unlike later Visigothic legislation, Isidore does not show any preju-
dice against converted Jews. Referring to monastic conversion, he states
that before God all converted members of a community have the same
rank.[89] Those Jews who will convert in eschatological times are con-
ceived of as heirs of Christ enjoying equal rights. In the present there is
not yet any distinction between those Jews who will convert and those
who will refuse to do so; therefore all of them remain in a state of pre-
liminary calling.

The present condition of the Jews is marked by two aspects: on the
one hand, they are called to faith, but on the other hand, they are
captives of blindness, stubbornly sticking to their ways, which will lead

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[82] *fid. cath.* II, 5, 8 (PL 83, 510; following Gen. 49, 27).

[83] *fid. cath.* II, 5, 8 (PL 83, 510).

[84] … *commune esse foedus Testamenti Novi Iudaeis et gentibus* (*fid. cath.* II, 14, 7; PL 83,
521). For the concept of a new covenant in Jewish tradition cf. Lichtenberger/Schreiner,
"Der Neue Bund in jüdischer Überlieferung", *Theologische Quartalschrift* 176 (1996), 272–
290.

[85] *pro.* 69 (PL 83, 171f.).

[86] *fid. cath.* II, 11, 1 (PL 83, 517).

[87] *fid. cath.* II, 3, 1 (PL 83, 505).

[88] *fid. cath.* II, 3, 4; (PL 83, 506).

[89] *Unius ordinis habentur* (*reg.* IV; Campos Ruiz, 96).

to no positive end.[90] There is hope for the Jews, but not according to the kind of hope they imagine.[91] However, not all the Jews are thought to attain salvation; only those who repent and convert will be saved.[92] It is remarkable that in this respect Isidore mentions divine election; apparently those Jews who will be saved have to be chosen by the grace of God. This corresponds to his assumption that the hearts of the Jews are so hard that it is useless to try to change and convert them;[93] it emerges that human attempts to missionize among them are useless, unless God's grace and election prepare the ground and pave the way.

It should be noted that Isidore assumes that some Jews are unable to acknowledge Christ because this corresponds to God's plan.[94] Since he does not deny the existence of human free will,[95] the behaviour of the Jews should be explained with reference both to their free choice and to God's foreknowledge. According to Isidore's interpretation of the economy of salvation, God called the Jews to faith, but they rejected him and in turn were repudiated.[96] God for his part foresaw this apostasy and the alleged unfaithfulness of the majority of the Jews, in much the same way as he foresaw the priority of the call addressed to the gentiles. Because of this preordained succession of events a chapter is entitled: *Ob incredulitatem Iudaeorum Christus ad gentes erat transiturus*.[97] Even though the biblical prophets foresaw the passion of Christ in all its details, which is indicated by Isidore's use of the gerund when describing these elements of the narrative, the guilt of the Jews is not suspended. Since he credits them with possessing free will, they remain responsible for their actions; otherwise he could not have maintained that God—in spite of his foreknowledge—felt disappointed by the Jews.[98] Yet the logical tension between the alleged guilt of the Jews and the divine economy of salvation is never satisfactorily resolved.

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[90] *fid. cath.* II, 13, 1 (PL 83, 519).
[91] *fid. cath.* II, 13, 4 (PL 83, 519).
[92] *fid. cath.* II, 13, 5 (PL 83, 520).
[93] *fid. cath.* I, 18, 4 (PL 83, 477).
[94] *fid. cath.* II, 6 (PL 83, 510ff.).
[95] *etym.* VIII, 5, 63 (concerning the Pelagians); *dif.* II, 32, 115 (PL 83, 87): *Nec humanum arbitrium Dei gratiam antecedit; sed ipsa gratia Dei volentem hominem praevenit.* Isidore again follows Augustine's example; cf. *ep.* 217, 28 (CSEL 57, 423) and *civ. Dei* VII, 30 (CCL 47, 212). For Augustine's view on the free will of the Jews see *de dono perseverantiae* IX, 23 (PL 45, 1005f.).
[96] *fid. cath.* II, 6, 8 (PL 83, 512).
[97] *fid. cath.* II, 7 (PL 83, 512f.).
[98] *fid. cath.* II, 10, 7 (PL 83, 517).

The conversion of the Jews will only occur at the end of times;[99] an extensive chapter is dedicated to an exposition of this point.[100] Isidore had apparently given up all hope that the Jews of his own times would embrace Christianity.[101] Therefore it is highly unlikely that he could have hoped to achieve their conversion by preaching.[102] He rather expects the appropriate time to come at the last judgement.[103] In keeping with biblical (prophetic) tradition, Elijah will come before the end in order to convert the children of Israel.[104] In contrast to this interpretation, according to which the Jews will be converted before the actual end of the world, in another passage Isidore assumes that this conversion will only happen after the destruction of the earth;[105] yet this discrepancy is due to the different underlying biblical texts.

It is significant, however, that Isidore fails to provide a precise definition of the point of time, which leaves the date of the expected conversion of the Jews somewhat unclear. Because everyone is called to believe in Christ, he is also the Lord of the Jews, who are to be subjected to his rule.[106] The gerund form used in this last passage should not be interpreted as an appeal to forced conversions in the present; as elsewhere it is used to highlight prophecy, foreseeing an event that forms part of the economy of salvation. Attempts to convert the Jews in the present are not expected to be successful.[107] Significantly, only Elijah's eschatological preaching will be able to convert them.[108] In contrast to this last passage, Isidore continues to use the name *Israel* also for the Jews; he does not limit its application to the church as the *verus Israel.*

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[99] *fid. cath.* II, 4, 1 (PL 83, 508). It is telling that the first editor Mariana (PL 83, 508 notes), writing in the 17th century, opts for the reading *convertendus* instead of *conversurus*; he probably assumes that Isidore did not expect the conversion of the Jews to happen of their own free will, but rather as a result of missionary activities by the church.

[100] *fid. cath.* II, 5 (PL 83, 508ff.). See the similar expectation of Augustine, *s.* 122, 5 (PL 38, 683).

[101] *fid. cath.* II, 5, 1 (PL 83, 508).

[102] Against Vega, "Una herejía judaizante del siglo VIII en España", *CD* 153 (1941), 63.

[103] *fid. cath.* II, 3, 3 (PL 83, 506).

[104] *fid. cath.* II, 5, 3 (PL 83, 508–509).

[105] *fid. cath.* II, 5, 6 (PL 83, 509; following Is. 6, 11ff.).

[106] *fid. cath.* II, 3, 8f. (PL 83, 507).

[107] *fid. cath.* II, 5, 4 (PL 83, 509).

[108] *fid. cath.* II, 5, 9 (PL 83, 510). For the preaching of Elijah see also Greg. Mag. *in Ez. I hom.* XII, 6. 9 (CCL 142, 186. 188) and Aug. *civ. Dei* XX, 29 (CCL 48, 752f.).

In the chapter on the eschatological conversion of the Jews the author describes conversion as an internal process, associated with healing and the acquisition of knowledge.[109] The use of the gerund (*quia baptizandi sunt*) again demonstrates that this conversion is inevitable and predestined, but it should not be taken as an indication that it is a normative injunction for Christians in the present.

In accordance with patristic tradition, the alleged disobedience of the Jews is supposed to be the reason for their dispersal among the nations.[110] In the diaspora the Jews are said to be in the power of gentile princes, which according to Isidore has been foretold in the Old Testament.[111] He probably subsumes both Roman emperors and Barbarian kings under the term *principes gentium*, who are allegedly given authority over the Jews in order to destroy them. In line with Isidore's argument, this should be interpreted as a reference to the military defeat of the Jews, possibly by Roman emperors such as Vespasian, Titus and Hadrian.

Isidore claims that the Jews are spiritually barren, lacking the spirit of prophecy and the help of angels.[112] By contrast, Christians can not only rely on the help of the Holy Spirit; they also have guardian angels.[113] This assumption highlights his "gentile" perspective, stressing the mission of the *gentes* within salvation history. The claim that the Jews lack the help of angels is meant to indicate their allegedly outdated position within that framework, and it is designed to show that the gentiles have been chosen instead of the Jews.

The latter are punished with *exterminatio*, which should be understood as banishment.[114] Isidore takes *exterminatio* to be synonymous with expulsion and diaspora.[115] Elsewhere he uses the term with reference to destruction.[116] Not in all cases should it be translated as "extermination", because this would narrow down the scope of different meanings available in Latin.[117] Had Isidore wanted to express an interpreta-

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[109] *fid. cath.* II, 5, 6 (PL 83, 509).

[110] *fid. cath.* II, 9, 1 (PL 83, 514).

[111] *fid. cath.* II, 9, 2 (PL 83, 515).

[112] *fid. cath.* II, 10, 6 (PL 83, 516): *tollam angelorum auxilium*. The spiritual drying up of the Jews is claimed to be foretold at Lev. 26, 19.

[113] *sent.* I, 10, 20 (CCL 111, 35).

[114] This is Isidore's interpretation of Jer. 12, 11: *Propter me exterminatione exterminata est omnis terra* (*fid. cath.* II, 9, 3; PL 83, 515).

[115] He uses *perditio* and *captivitas* as parallel terms (*fid. cath.* II, 9, 3; PL 83, 515).

[116] … *civitatem Ierusalem in exterminationem fuisse* (*fid. cath.* I, 5, 8; PL 83, 462).

[117] Against Albert, "Isidore of Seville: His Attitude Towards Judaism and His Impact

tion according to which the Jews should be "exterminated", he might instead have chosen the verb *extirpare*, which he uses with this meaning in his letter to the Lombard king.[118] Albert used this passage of *de fide catholica* to underpin her argument that Isidore's theological positions were in accordance with anti-Jewish policies pursued in his lifetime, "designed to lead to the ultimate disappearance of Judaism in Spain."[119] However, this conclusion can be questioned, especially with a view to some measures endorsed by the 4th council of Toledo meeting under Isidore's presidency, which prohibited to use force against Jews who were unbaptized and who had not received the Christian sacraments.

One of the metaphors applied to the Jews is the image of the earthly Jerusalem, which is supposed to lie perpetually in ruins.[120] These statements cannot refer to the historical city, because the author is aware of the fact that Christ's sepulchre attracts large crowds of pilgrims.[121] The irrevocable destruction of the (earthly) Jerusalem is complemented by the eternal captivity of the Jews.[122] This captivity cannot have been understood literally, since the Jews still enjoyed the formal rights of Roman citizens in Visigothic Spain; it must be interpreted as referring to the alleged spiritual captivity of the Jews in error. In spite of that, the designation of all the Jews as *captivi* still labels them as aliens according to the literal sense of the word, who have been expelled from their homeland. The great importance Isidore attaches to this topic emerges from the fact that he dedicates four chapters to aspects of this question.[123] Israel, the chosen people of the Old Testament, is replaced by the gentiles, who are called by God to go on a pilgrimage to the heav-

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on Early Medieval Canon Law", *JQR* 80 (1990), 211, who always chooses "extermination", thus falling prey to a "false friend".

[118] ... *hereticorum segitibus extirpatis* (*Misc. Wisig.* VIII, 25). The emperor Augustus uses the verb *excidere* when he refers to a policy of extermination in his *res gestae*; cf. Noethlichs, *Das Judentum und der römische Staat*, Darmstadt 1996, 43.

[119] Albert, "Isidore of Seville: His Attitude Towards Judaism and His Impact on Early Medieval Canon Law", *JQR* 80 (1990), 212.

[120] *fid. cath.* II, 10, 4; II, 12, 3 (PL 83, 516. 517). See also Isidore's interpretation of Daniel's vision: *Et usque ad consummationem et finem perseverabit desolatio* (Dan. 9, 27: *fid. cath.* II, 12, 6; PL 83, 518).

[121] *fid. cath.* I, 9, 11 (PL 83, 467).

[122] *fid. cath.* II, 11, 2 (PL 83, 517).

[123] *De ruina Ierusalem, De spretis Iudaeis et Synagogae reprobatione, De perpetua ruina Ierusalem* and *De irreparabili desolatione Iudaeorum* (*fid. cath.* II, 10–13).

enly Jerusalem.[124] The chosen people is now constituted by the gentiles, who used to be in ignorance of God, but who have now come to seek Christ.[125]

Historical argument is subjected to a theological interpretation of history. Therefore Isidore, following patristic tradition, neglects or ignores the time difference between the usurpation of Herod, the end of the royal line of Jewish descent and the birth of Christ.[126] The construction of historical coincidences by imprecise dating also allows him to claim that the destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple followed right after the passion of Christ.[127] Historical argument is important for the refutation of a Jewish claim that the line of Jewish kings had not come to an end. This controversy is an exception in that it is not about the foundations of biblical hermeneutics, but about historical facts, whose veracity is debated. Traditionally, Christian exegetes interpreted the blessing of Jacob (Gen. 49, 10) as a reference to the first coming of Christ; this position is endorsed by Isidore.[128] However, he feels obliged to refute a Jewish objection to the traditional Christian understanding; Jews claim that somewhere in the east there is still a king from the tribe of Judah.[129] This claim is not mentioned in any earlier work written *adversus Iudaeos* nor in any of Isidore's other works.[130] His refutation is based partly on his low opinion of oral tradition, which is not substantiated by witnesses who appear to be trustworthy in Isidore's eyes.[131]

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[124] *fid. cath.* II, 12, 3 (PL 83, 518).

[125] *fid. cath.* II, 6, 7 (PL 83, 512).

[126] *fid. cath.* I, 8, 2 (PL 83, 464), referring to Gen. 49, 10. He also disregards the time difference *chron.* 237 (CCL 112, 114): *Et cessante regno ac sacerdotio Iudaeorum dominus Iesus Christus ex virgine nascitur* and *etym.* VI, 2, 38: *Ubi enim Christus advenit, sacerdotium Iudaeorum obmutuit, lex et prophetia cessavit.* See Basset, "The Use of History in the *chronicon* of Isidore of Seville", *History and Theory* 15 (1976), 278–292; Vázquez de Parga, "Notas sobre la obra histórica de S. Isidoro", *Isidoriana*, León 1961, 99–106.

[127] *fid. cath.* I, 44, 4; II, 10, 5 (PL 83, 489. 516). By contrast, Origen is aware of the time difference of 42 years; cf. *c. Cels.* IV, 22 (SC 136, 234–236). For imprecise historical argument in Isidore and his lack of historical perspective see Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique*, Paris 1959/83, 810.

[128] *fid. cath.* I, 8, 1 (PL 83, 464).

[129] *fid. cath.* I, 8, 2 (PL 83, 464). For an interpretation of Gen. 49, 10 see also *quaest. in Gen.* 29, 8–11; 31, 21–26 (PL 83, 269. 280), but without reference to the mysterious Jewish king.

[130] When he discusses Zerubabel in the *Etymologies* he clearly refers to the past (*etym.* VII, 6, 81).

[131] When he discusses *historia* in the *Etymologies* (*etym.* I, 41, 1–2) he stresses the importance of reliable testimony; *historia* needs an eyewitness, who is in a position to testify to things he has seen. Isidore translates the Greek *historein* as *videre vel cognoscere.*

However, it is striking that he fails to adduce an argument he might have used to refute the Jewish claim, irrespective of its historical reliability, namely the alleged murder of all descendants of David at the order of the emperor Domitian. Isidore himself mentions this incident in his *Chronicle*, which may have been compiled at about the same time as *de fide catholica*.[132]

It is not very probable that the Jewish claim refers to the kingdom of the Khazars or to Himyar in southern Arabia.[133] It may rather allude to the Babylonian exilarchs,[134] whose importance was highlighted in rabbinic literature especially after the end of the Palestinian patriarchate around 425.[135] Although Mesopotamian Jews were subjected to

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See also *etym.* I, 44, 4: *Quod historia est eorum temporum quae vidimus.* For a parallel to Isidore's explanation (*etym.* I, 41, 1) in the commentary of Servius to Virgil (*in Aen.* I, 373) see Lubac, *Exégèse Médiévale*, Paris 1959/64, I/2, 426 note 4. For Isidore's disregard of *auditio* cf. Diesner, *Isidor von Sevilla und das westgotische Spanien*, Trier 1978, 92.

[132] *chron.* 261 (CCL 112, 126. 127); this is reported also by Eusebius (*hist. eccl.* III, 19), Dio Cassius (*hist.* LXIX, 23, 2), Ps.-Fredegar, *chron.* II, 37 (MGH, SRM, II, 61), and Michael Syrus (*chron.* VI, 3); cf. Juster, *Les Juifs dans l'Empire Romain*, Paris 1914, 392 f.

[133] The Khazars only converted to Judaism around 740; see Dunlop, "Khazars", *EJ* 10 (1971), 947; Millás, "La conversión de los Jazares", *Sefarad* 4 (1944), 191–194. The kingdom of Himyar only lasted until the beginning of the 6th century. For different interpretations see Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden* V, Leipzig 1909, 70; Krauss/Horbury, *The Jewish-Christian Controversy*, Tübingen 1995, I, 71 note 12; Castán Lacoma, "Un opúsculo apologético de San Isidoro", *RET* 20 (1960), 329; Blumenkranz, *Juifs et chrétiens dans le monde occidental 430–1096*, Paris/La Haye 1960, 230–235; Posnanski, *Schiloh. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Messiaslehre*, Leipzig 1904, 302 f. The ongoing Jewish-Christian controversy on Gen. 49, 10 is attested by Paschasius Radbertus of Corbie in the 9th century; cf. Krauss/Horbury, *The Jewish-Christian Controversy*, 71.

[134] Juster, *Les Juifs dans l'Empire Romain*, Paris 1914, 400; Roth, *Jews, Visigoths and Muslims in Medieval Spain*, Leiden *et al.* 1994, 14; Albert, "Un nouvel examen de la politique anti-juive wisigothique", *REJ* 135 (1976), 10 note 38. Late antique Christian authors often interpreted Gen. 49, 10 as a reference to the davidic descent of the Palestinian patriarch; see Orig. *princ.* IV, 1, 3; Cyrill of Jerusalem, *cat.* XII de Christo Incarnato 17 (PG 33, 745); Jerome, *in Ps.* 88 (CCL 78, 404). It is unclear whether Isidore knew these passages; he never mentions the office of the Jewish patriarch. Since the patriarchal dynasty ended at the beginning of the 5th century, the Jewish claim reported by Isidore can hardly have referred to this institution, which had ceased to exist two centuries earlier.

[135] Jacobs, *Die Institution des jüdischen Patriarchen*, Tübingen 1995, 225–231. For the alleged davidic descent of the exilarchs (following Gen. 49, 10) cf. bHor 11b, bSanh 5a and BerR 97, 10; see Jacobs, 219 ff. For a history of the exilarchs see Grossman, *The Babylonian Exilarchate in the Gaonic Period* (hebr.), Jerusalem 1984 and Goode, "The Exilarchate in the Eastern Caliphate (637–1258)", *JQR* 31 (1940/41), 149–169. According to Jacobs (225) the office of exilarch is not traceable before the beginning of the 3rd century. However, between the end of the 5th and the beginning of the 7th century the line of exilarchs was probably interrupted; cf. ibid., 231.

the Sassanian empire, they did enjoy considerable autonomy under the authority of a supposed scion of the davidic dynasty,[136] which may have given rise to an interpretation of the blessing of Jacob as referring to this situation. This conclusion acquires a certain degree of plausibility if we remember that Origen had compared the position of the patriarch, who held office in Palestine under Roman souzerainty, to that of a king.[137] It should be noted that no Christian author shows any knowledge of the inner-Jewish polemics against the claim of the patriarchs to be of davidic descent, even though this criticism could have been used for purposes of Christian propaganda. Apparently Christian authorities were hardly aware of inner-Jewish discussions.[138] This also applies to the Babylonian exilarch: neither does Isidore (or any other Christian author) transfer the Jewish polemics against the patriarch to the exilarch, nor does he mention the interruption of the line of exilarchs after the alleged assassination of Mar Zutra by the Sassanians at the end of the 5th century, even though this last fact could have been used to back the Christian interpretation of Gen. 49, 10.

Instead, Isidore tries to refute the Jewish claim by alleging that without temple and sacrifice there could be no Jewish king or priest.[139] This argument could have been easily invalidated by a reference to the situation during the wanderings of the Israelites through the desert and under the judges, when there were priests without temple or king. After the return from the Babylonian exile there were priests and sacrifices, but no kings.[140] Isidore is equally unaware of the ongoing existence of Jewish priestly families after the destruction of the second temple, which could have been known to him if he had had any closer contact to his Jewish contemporaries. Apparently, he considered it unthinkable that there could be priests without cult or sacrifice; furthermore the claim that the Jewish priesthood had long since ceased to exist formed part of the tradition of Christian anti-Jewish polemics.[141] Adopting an

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[136] Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition in Early Judaism. Its History and Significance for Messianism*, Atlanta 1995.

[137] *ep. ad Afric.* 20 (SC 302, 566).

[138] Jacobs, *Die Institution des jüdischen Patriarchen*, Tübingen 1995, 332f.

[139] *fid. cath.* I, 8, 3 (PL 83, 465); this is similar to the argument of John Chrysostom *adv. Iud.* VI, 5 (PG 48, 911f.).

[140] For a similar argument in Origen (following an exegesis of Gen. 49, 10) see *princ.* IV, 1, 3 (Görgemanns/Karpp, 678).

[141] Aug. *adv. Iud.* IX (PL 42, 62). For Isidore's views on the priesthood see *etym.* VII, 12, 17. Whereas the *Codex Theodosianus* still contained laws that were geared to securing the privileges of Jewish officeholders (*patriarchae, presbyteroi, archisynagogoi*: *CTh* XVI, 8,

almost Sadduceean point of view, this perspective was in line with the degradation of contemporary Jewry to a supposedly lifeless and spiritually dead community.[142]

The history of the Jews is conceptualized as a degeneration.[143] This is especially true for the period before the passion of Christ, when the Jews allegedly underwent a negative development. After the incarnation and passion their situation seems to be more static, unchanging, without any possibility of further development, which basically amounts to an end of their history. By contrast, all gentile nations are in a position to develop further, especially with regard to religion.[144] From now on, history takes place inside the church, which embraces more and more nations, until the Catholic church comprises the entire world.[145] In Isidore's optimistic view of history there is no room for setbacks and defeats. He does not adapt the Augustinian model of the two cities to his own thinking and writing.

Isidore's intention to limit his prooftexts to testimonies drawn from the Old Testament may be responsible for his failure to discuss post-biblical historical events such as the Bar Kokhba-revolt or the failed attempt by the emperor Julian to rebuild the temple, even though the latter event is reported in his *Chronicle*.[146] Probably for the same reason he refrains from mentioning Flavius Josephus, he does not even adduce the famous *testimonium Flavianum*,[147] although Isidore himself mentions

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2. 13. 15), these were not included in the *Lex Romana Visigothorum*, which may have contributed to Christian ignorance converning Jewish priestly families; see Isid. *all.* 87 (PL 83, 112) and *quaest. in I Reg.* 2, 5 (PL 83, 394). For the history of Jewish priesthood in late antiquity see Terbuyken, "Priesteramt und Opferkult bei Juden und Christen in der Spätantike", *Chartulae*, Münster 1998, 271–284.

[142] *quaest. in I Reg.* 3, 3 (PL 83, 395).

[143] *fid. cath.* I, 31, 2 (PL 83, 482).

[144] Diesner, *Isidor von Sevilla und seine Zeit*, Stuttgart 1973, 73.

[145] *fid. cath.* I, 11, 2 (PL 83, 471).

[146] *chron.* 343 ff. (CCL 112, 160–165).

[147] Schreckenberg, *Die Flavius-Josephus-Tradition in Antike und Mittelalter*, Leiden 1972 and id., "Josephus und die christliche Wirkungsgeschichte seines *Bellum Iudaicum*", *ANRW* II, 21, 2, Berlin/New York 1984, 1106–1217. For references to Josephus see John Chrysostom *adv. Iud.* V, 9 (PG 48, 897); Tert. *pol.* 19, 6 (CCL 1, 121); Orig. *comm. in Mt.* X, 17 (GCS Orig. 10, 22); *c. Cels.* I, 16; I, 47; II, 13 (SC 132, 118. 198 ff. 324). For the so-called *testimonium Flavianum* cf. Whealey, "Josephus on Jesus: Evidence from the First Millennium", *ThZ* 51 (1995), 285–304. In an anti-Jewish sense Josephus was first used around 370 by Ps.-Hegesippus; in the Latin west the *testimonium* was made known by Jerome (directed at educated "pagans") and by the Latin translation of the *antiquitates* provided by Cassiodorus.

this author elsewhere in his works, especially in the *Chronicle*.[148] His absence from *de fide catholica* should be attributed to the tradition of the literature *adversus Iudaeos*, whose argument was mainly limited to testimonies from the Old Testament. In addition, Isidore had the intention to deduce Christian doctrine from that part of the Bible alone, which reinforced the limitation of the testimonies.

Since the people of Israel are called to Christian faith,[149] they are traitors and rebels against their legitimate lord as long as they refuse to join the church. It is significant that Isidore does not cover up Christ's Jewish background. In his exegesis of Daniel's vision he explains that the mountain, from which the stone that covers the whole earth originates, is the *populus Iudaeorum*, from which Christ was born.[150]

Since the Jews do not have Christ as the key to understand the scriptures, they cannot realize the truth.[151] Christian teaching is a *mysterium* whose meaning (*significantia*) can only be understood with the help of signs (*signa*) from the scriptures; the only access to Catholic doctrine is *scripturae auctoritate*.[152] Both the scriptures and the sacraments of the church are mysteries that can only be grasped by the faithful;[153] the key to any true understanding is the *fides Christi*, which can only be received, retained and lived inside the church. Only the church can open up the way to the mysteries. Accordingly all interpretations of the scriptures not in line with Christian faith and its hermeneutical presuppositions are denied any authority.[154]

It is apparently inconceivable for Isidore that the *novitas gratiae* and the mutation of God's commandments could happen again, which would bring about a replacement of the church by another new covenant.[155] The typological basis for this self-confident assumption is the

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[148] See also *ort. et obit.* 76, 2 (Chaparro Gómez, 213), based on Jerome, *vir. ill.* II. Isidore refers to Josephus also when discussing the tomb of Abraham (*ort. et obit.* 6, 3; Chaparro Gómez, 121 f.), which is based on the Latin translation of Ps.-Hegesippus, *bell. iud.* 4. For other references to Josephus see *etym.* III, 25, 1; VI, 2, 21.

[149] *fid. cath.* II, 3, 6 (PL 83, 506).

[150] *fid. cath.* I, 10, 8 (PL 83, 470), following Dan. 2, 34 f. See also *quaest. in Gen.* 8, 1 (PL 83, 235), where Christ is expressly labelled a Jew.

[151] *fid. cath.* II, 5, 5 (PL 83, 509).

[152] *fid. cath.* I, 5, 1 (PL 83, 460).

[153] *fid. cath.* II, 15, 8; II, 24, 1; II, 27, 1 (PL 83, 524. 530. 535).

[154] See also Cypr. *testim.* I, 5 (CCL 3, 10 f.); Aug. *c. adv. leg. et proph.* II, 7, 29 (CCL 49, 114). For the *regula fidei* as a precondition for an understanding of scripture cf. Spitz, *Die Metaphysik des geistigen Schriftsinns*, Münster 1976, 8.

[155] *quaest. in Ex.* 59, 3 (PL 83, 319); see also *quaest. in Num.* 41, 1 (PL 83, 356); *all.* 236 (PL 83, 128). Also Augustine excludes the possibility that a second *mutatio* could come

fact that Moses broke the tablets of the covenant only once.[156] The centrality of the *fides Christi* precludes any possibility of the replacement of his church, which is perceived as the only institution administering the salutary sacraments.[157] The church is the carrier of God's grace.[158] It should be noted that unlike Augustine Isidore never warns Christians against an overbearing attitude towards the Jews.[159]

His theological views on Jews and Judaism are deeply rooted in Christian tradition; he does not advocate any innovations, neither concerning their position in Christian theology nor regarding Christian mission among them in the present. The Augustinian theory of the Jews as living testimony to Christian truth plays only a minor role in Isidore's works.[160] However, the whole treatise *de fide catholica* in a way serves this purpose: the Jews allegedly prove the truth of Christianity and of the New Testament by their scriptures. This notion is presented in much greater detail in the *quaestiones*.

3.4. *Eschatology*

Isidore's view of history is an optimistic one;[161] he sees the church as the bearer of all biblical promises, which will not suffer any major tribulations and setbacks until the end of the current world age. It is therefore no surprise that Isidore hardly discusses eschatological questions at all; in his time the situation of the church and of the Christian kingdoms

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about (*adv. Iud.* IX; PL 42, 62). By contrast, at the end of the 12th century Joachim of Fiore expected the replacement of the New Testament at the end of times by a mere spiritual perception of divine truth; cf. Patschovsky, "Feindbilder der Kirche. Juden und Ketzer im Vergleich", *Juden und Christen zur Zeit der Kreuzzüge*, Sigmaringen 1999, 335.

[156] *quaest. in Ex.* 40, 2 (PL 83, 307).

[157] *quaest. in Esdram* 3, 1 (PL 83, 424).

[158] *fid. cath.* II, 28, 2 (PL 83, 536): *Nos autem, sub gratia positi.*

[159] See Augustine's warning *adv. Iud.* X (PL 42, 64). However, this does not modify his conviction that the New Testament will never change (*enarr. in Ps.* 149, 1; CCL 40, 2178). Again Joachim of Fiore held a different view, warning gentile Christians that their sins would lead to a loss of their convenant with God; cf. Patschovsky, "Feindbilder der Kirche. Juden und Ketzer im Vergleich", *Juden und Christen zur Zeit der Kreuzzüge*, Sigmaringen 1999, 335.

[160] *fid. cath.* II, 12, 1 (PL 83, 517). See also *quaest. in Gen.* 6, 16; 8, 7 (PL 83, 226. 236). For Augustine cf. *enarr. in Ps.* 58, 1, 22 (CCL 39, 744), where the Jews are called *testes iniquitatis suae et veritatis nostrae*. See now González Salinero, *Las conversiones forzosas de los judíos en el reino visigodo*, Rome 2000, 112.

[161] Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law*, Berkeley *et al.* 1999, 111.

was still relatively secure. He is mainly interested in the past (biblical history) and the present (the congregation of the church among the gentiles); he hardly touches upon the future.[162] Apparently he had no urgent eschatological expectations.[163] This optimistic view dated back to the period of the conversion of the Visigoths to Catholicism; it could see itself reinforced by the successive marginalization of the "heretical" Byzantines on Iberian soil.[164] Isidore denies any theological relevance to the contemporary Roman empire because in his view only the kingdom of Christ will last until the end of the world; Christ's rule has allegedly broken the succession of worldly empires.[165] Until the end of the time, Christ's empire will continously expand by the inclusion of all the gentiles still outside the Catholic church.

In keeping with patristic tradition, Isidore regards his own time as part of the final period of world history,[166] but he gives no indication that he expects the end of times to be imminent. His exegesis is very much aimed at the present; he hardly says anything concerning the future history of the church.[167] The Jews are expected to regret their involvement in Christ's crucifixion at the last judgement.[168] Isidore does not specify in this connection whether this regret will result in their conversion to Christianity. When discussing questions of moral theology in other works he regards repentance as a precondition for conversion, which is, however, not understood as a conversion to another faith, but as a complete turn of man to the service of God, without any change of religion.[169] Concerning the repentance of the Jews at the time

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[162] For Isidore's concept of time cf. Fontaine, "Tres nociones del tiempo en el pensamiento de Isidoro de Sevilla", *X Congreso nacional de estudios clásicos* 2 (2001), 365–371.

[163] In his *Chronicle* Isidore stresses that the duration of the sixth and final world age is known to God alone; see *chron.* 418 (CCL 112, 206. 207) and *etym.* V, 39, 42. For a similar attitude of Julian of Toledo cf. *prognosticon futuri saeculi* III, 1 (CCL 115, 82).

[164] Löwe, *Von Theoderich dem Großen zu Karl dem Großen*, Darmstadt 1956, 21–26.

[165] *fid. cath.* I, 58, 1. 3 (PL 83, 495. 496).

[166] *fid. cath.* II, 1, 13 (PL 83, 502).

[167] Hillgarth, "Eschatological and Political Concepts in the Seventh Century", *Le Septième Siècle. Changements et Continuités—The Seventh Century. Change and Continuity*, London 1992, 225. For eschatological concepts and millennarian movements in late antique Spain cf. García Moreno, "Expectativas milenaristas y escatológicas en la España tardoantigua (ss. V–VIII)", *Spania*, Barcelona 1996, 103–109; on the pertinent treatise by Julian of Toledo cf. Stancati, "Alle origini dell'escatologia cristiana sistematica: il *Prognosticon futuri saeculi* di San Giuliano di Toledo (sec. VII)", *Angelicum* 73 (1996), 401–433.

[168] *fid. cath.* I, 36, 4 (PL 83, 486).

[169] *sent.* II, 7, 4; II, 8, 2 (CCL 111, 105f. 109).

of Christ's second coming, Isidore probably assumes that their regret will entail their conversion.[170] Assuming full inner conversion to be a precondition for a reconciliation with God, he cannot have approved of forced baptisms, which would have lacked the necessary inner basis.

Isidore follows patristic tradition in claiming that the Jews expect the Antichrist,[171] which is yet another indication that his work is addressed to Christians and not Jews. This charge is merely meant to corroborate anti-Jewish sentiments. When he repeats this accusation in the second book he even adduces a prooftext from the New Testament.[172]

Not only in his anti-Jewish treatise but also in his other works Isidore shows a remarkable lack of interest in eschatology. His attention is generally focussed on the present, which he conceptualizes as the period of the gradual spread of the gentile church over the entire earth among the *gentes*. His primary aim is to justify this "gentile" perspective, which could not have been substantiated by a more detailed discussion of eschatology or hightened expectations concerning an imminent end of the world.

3.5. *Ecclesiology*

In the title of his treatise *de fide catholica* Isidore names only the Jews as opponents of church teaching. However, the question needs to be asked whether he also addressed other potential "enemies" and outsiders. Numerous earlier treatises *de fide* had been directed at different groups of opponents at the same time, and Isidore himself combatted Byzantines and heretics not only in other works but also politically, as an exponent of the ecclesiastical hierarchy.[173] From the end of the

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[170] *etym*. VI, 19, 74. This may imply a fundamental change of mind (*metanoia*); cf. Fontaine, "Pénitence publique et conversion personnelle: l'apport d'Isidore de Séville à l'évolution médiévale de la pénitence", *Tradition et actualité chez Isidore de Séville*, London 1988, 147.

[171] *fid. cath.* II, 2, 11 (PL 83, 505). For patristic tradition cf. Jerome, *ep.* 129, 7, 4 (CSEL 56/1, 174).

[172] *fid. cath.* II, 6, 2 (PL 83, 511): Jer. 5, 12; John 5, 43.

[173] In his *Chronicle* he also considers Byzantines and heretics to be enemies of the Visigoths; cf. Reydellet, "Les intentions idéologiques et politiques dans la chronique d'Isidore de Séville", *MAH* 82 (1970), 389. According to Díaz y Díaz, "Introducción general" (*San Isidoro de Sevilla: Etimologías*, Madrid 1982, 137) his "obsesión contra el judaísmo y las herejías" was one of Isidore's motives for writing the *Chronicle*. For a parallelization of Jews and heretics in Augustine cf. *enarr. in Ps.* 65, 5 (CCL 39,

3rd century onwards, anti-Jewish works had increasingly focussed on other "enemies" as well, such as pagans, heretics and schismatics.[174] Jerome had claimed that Jews and heretics would look for God in vain, because—like philosophers and "Barbarians"—they were allegedly following the wrong path.[175] Already at the earliest known Spanish church council, Jews and heretics had been ranked among *infideles*.[176] A similar tendency can be detected in Roman legislation after the beginning of the 5th century; Jews, Samaritans, heretics and pagans were often discussed in one and the same law; yet at the beginning each group still received separate treatment.[177] When the Theodosian Code was compiled, a distinction was still observed between Jews (professing a *religio licita*) on the one hand and heretics and pagans on the other, even though all groups were already put on the same level.[178] However, from the middle of the 5th century onwards Jews were subsumed under anti-pagan laws.[179] When the duties of Gothic kings were defined at the 8th council of Toledo in 653, the rulers were required to defend Catholic faith against Jews (being named first) and heretics.[180]

Fulgentius of Ruspe, suffering from Vandal oppression at the beginning of the 6th century in North Africa, had declared all those who did not profess Catholic faith to be messengers of the devil.[181] Isidore followed this example, considering pagans and heretics to be part of the

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843). However, elsewhere Augustine does make a difference between both groups: *Ecce intellegunt Iudaei quod non intellegunt Ariani* (*in Joh.* 17, 16; CCL 36, 178). A *Missa sancti Augustini episcopi* has been handed down in the Old Spanish liturgy, which containes a long list of prayers, culminating in prayers for Jews, heretics and schismatics (Férotin, *Le "Liber Mozarabicus Sacramentorum" et les Manuscrits Mozarabes*, Paris 1912, 415).

[174] Blumenkranz, *Die Judenpredigt Augustins*, Basel 1946, 2 note 6.

[175] *Deum non recte quaerunt* (*in Tit.* 3, *ad v.* 9; PL 26, 594).

[176] Conc. Illib. (first decade of the 4th century) *c.* 16 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica IV, 247).

[177] Noethlichs, *Das Judentum und der römische Staat*, Darmstadt 1996, 110f. See also Zuccotti, *Furor haereticorum. Studi sul trattamento giuridico della follia e sulla persecuzione della eterodossia religiosa nella legislazione del tardo Impero Romano*, Milan 1992.

[178] Theodosius II *nov.* III, 1 (Meyer, 7; dated 438): *Quod sensibus excaecatos Iudaeos Samaritas paganos et cetera haereticorum genera portentorum audere cognoscimus.*

[179] Brennecke, "*Imitatio-reparatio-continuatio*. Die Judengesetzgebung im Ostgotenreich Theoderichs des Großen als *reparatio imperii*?", *ZAC* 4 (2000), 143f. For some cases of joint action by Jews and "heretics" (Donatists and Arians) in late antiquity cf. Bradbury, *Severus of Minorca: Letter on the Conversion of the Jews*, Oxford 1996, 56.

[180] VIII Toledo *c.* 10 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 429).

[181] *de fide ad Petrum* 81 (CCL 91 A, 757), following Mt. 25, 41. For the situation in North Africa see González Salinero, "The Anti-Judaism of Quodvultdeus in the Vandal and Catholic Context of the Fifth Century in North Africa", *REJ* 155 (1996), 447–459.

corpus diaboli.[182] From the reign of Justinian I onwards, Byzantine legislation increasingly extended the scope of meaning of the term "heretic", subsuming all non-orthodox groups under this heading, which also applied to the Jews.[183] This extension of the label of heresy can also be detected in Gregory of Tours, who refers to the Jews as heretics when he describes their participation in the welcome extended to King Guntram in Orleans.[184]

In patristic tradition the church had often been compared to Noah's ark, outside of which there could allegedly be no salvation. Seen from this angle, heretics, schismatics, Jews and all those professing diverging faiths could be labelled as outsiders. Isidore makes this comparison in the *allegoriae*.[185] This notion had been developed by Cyprian in the 3rd century.[186] From the 4th century onwards, this north African tradition can be found in all important patristic authors;[187] on the Iberian peninsula it is attested by Gregory of Elvira.[188] It should be noted that Leander of Seville explicitly compares the Catholic church to paradise in the concluding sermon he preached at the 3rd council of To-

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[182] *sent.* I, 16, 14 (CCL 111, 58). For Augustine's position cf. *enarr. in Ps.* 124, 5 (CCL 40, 1839).

[183] *nov. Iust.* 37, 8 (from 535): *Neque enim Iudaeos neque paganos neque Donatistas neque Arianos neque alios quoscumque haereticos vel speluncas habere vel quaedam quasi ritu ecclesiastico facere patimur, cum hominibus impiis sacra peragere satis absurdum est.* See Avi-Yonah, *The Jews under Roman and Byzantine Rule*, Jerusalem 1984, 247; Schäfer, *Geschichte der Juden in der Antike*, Stuttgart/Neukirchen-Vluyn 1983, 204 and Klingenberg, "Justinians Novellen zur Judengesetzgebung", *Aschkenas* 8 (1998), 7–27.

[184] *hist.* VIII, 1 (MGH, SRM, I, 1, 370f.): *"Vae genti Iudaicae malae et perfidae ac subdolo semper sensu viventi …" … O regem admirabili prudentia clarum! Sic intellexit dolositatem hereticorum.* Gregory uses Arians and Jews as "agents of differentiation" in order to sharpen and strengthten the Catholic sense of identity; cf. Keely, "Arians and Jews in the *Histories* of Gregory of Tours", *JMH* 23 (1997), 103–115. However, unlike the Arians Gregory does not denigrate the Jews; cf. ibid. 105. See also Moorhead, "Gregory of Tours on the Arian Kingdoms", *Studi medievali* 36 (1995), 903–915.

[185] *all.* 12 (PL 83, 102); see also *quaest. in Jos.* 2, 3; 7, 4.

[186] … *salus extra ecclesiam non est* (*ep.* 73, 21; CSEL 3/2, 795); see also *ep.* 75, 15 (CSEL 3/2, 820) and *de ecclesiae catholicae unitate* VI (CCL 3, 253).

[187] Jerome, *ep.* 15, 2 (CSEL 54, 64); Aug. *bapt.* IV, 17, 24 (CSEL 51, 250): *Salus extra ecclesiam non est*; Greg. Mag. *moral. praef.* VIII, 17 (CCL 143, 22f.), *moral.* XIV, 5, 5 (CCL 143 A, 701); Fulgentius of Ruspe, *de fide ad Petrum* 80 (CCL 91 A, 757).

[188] *de arca Noe* 33 (CCL 69, 154f.); see also the *Symbolum Quicunque*, the so-called *Athanasianum*, which was probably composed in the 5th or 6th century on the Iberian peninsula (Denzinger, Enchiridion symbolorum, Freiburg 1954, 17f.). For the relationship of Isidore to Gregory see Domínguez del Val, "Isidoro de Sevilla y los *tractatus origenis* de Gregorio de Elvira", in: F. Paschke (ed.), *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen*, Berlin 1981, 149–160.

ledo.[189] In the creed formulated at the 4th council of Toledo, in whose redaction Isidore must have played a major role, Catholic faith is presented as the way to eternal salvation.[190]

Isidore's interest in the problem of heresy is shown by the fact that 16 out of the 33 undoubtedly authentic chapters of his treatise *de viris illustribus* are dedicated to this topic.[191] In six chapters of his *Chronicle*, which may have been written at nearly the same time as *de fide catholica*, he deals with the "Monophysite" *acephali*.[192] In spite of the fact that the title he chose for his work on Catholic faith indicates that he argues against the Jews, it is striking that he refrains from mentioning Arians or other heretics, not even in the first chapters dedicated to a discussion of christology. In patristic tradition Jews and Arians had often been compared to each other; Isidore himself draws this parallel elsewhere in his works.[193] Even though the conversion of the Goths was still a fairly recent event, Isidore apparently did not consider Arianism to be any serious danger to the Catholic church, or he thought it inopportune to remind his readers of the Arian past of the Goths, which is, however, treated in his historiographical works. It is all the more remarkable that Arianism, unlike Judaism, is passed over in silence in his treatise on Catholic faith. This may be due to his desire to sever any notional links of the Goths with their Arian past, which was to appear as something remote, alien and un-Gothic, out of step with his redefinition of Gothic identity. But it should be remembered that all 7th-century councils of Toledo commemorated the "victory" of the Goths over Arianism by a

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[189] … *foris a Dei paradiso, hoc est extra catholicam ecclesiam* (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 150); this comparison is also made by Isidore *quaest. in Gen.* 3, 2 (PL 83, 216).

[190] *Haec est catholicae ecclesiae fides … quam quisque firmissime custodierit perpetuam salutem habebit* (IV Toledo *c.* 1; Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 182 f.).

[191] Hillgarth, "Historiography in Visigothic Spain", *La storiografia altomedievale. Settimane di studio* 17 (1970), 293: "When Isidore recorded his predecessors' writings he was clearly more concerned with the question of heresy than with anything else."

[192] Ibid., 294. Hillgarth concludes: "If Isidore's *Chronicle* and *De viris* have a direction it is against heresy." (Ibid., 296). Isidore explicitly associates the *acephali* with the opponents of the council of Chalcedon: … *heresis Acefalorum Calcedonense concilium inpugnantium.* … *Cuius heresis peste plurimi actenus Orientalium languent* (chron. 385; CCL 112, 184. 185).

[193] Ambros. *de fide* II, 15, 130 (CSEL 78, 102). Isidore compares Jews and heretics *quaest. in Gen.* 20, 3 (PL 83, 253); *quaest. in Lev.* 12, 7. 14 (PL 83, 331 f.) and *quaest. in III Reg.* 4, 1–2 (PL 83, 417). Already the author of the *vita Antonii* (possibly Athanasius of Alexandria) claimed that there was no difference between Arians and Jews; cf. *vit. Anton.* 69 and 82.

solemn profession of faith in the Trinity, which followed the text used in 589. The defeat of heresy was thus celebrated liturgically.

After the 3rd council of Toledo Arians soon disappeared from the sources.[194] In 592 the 2nd council of Zaragoza ordered a new ordination of Arian priests before they were allowed to officiate in the Catholic church.[195] King Witteric (603–610) was probably not an Arian;[196] Isidore merely mentions his usurpation and violent rule;[197] it may be assumed that he would have mentioned Witteric's return to Arianism if it had really taken place,[198] unless he deliberately decided to cover up such a humiliating defeat of the Catholic church. There is no evidence that there was any real danger of an Arian restauration at the beginning of the 7th century;[199] neither conciliar canons nor theological writings give any indication that Catholic clergy were troubled by Arian tendencies. In general, Isidore's opposition to Arianism is less pronounced than Augustine's or his own against the Jews.[200]

In his discussion of the Trinity and of Christ's natures in *de fide catholica* Isidore directs his argument only against the Jews.[201] He may want to combat Arian positions as well, but he never says so explicitly.[202] His argument in favour of Christ's two natures also appears in his statements at the 2nd council of Seville (619).[203] When he asserts that

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[194] Díaz y Díaz, "Introducción general", *San Isidoro de Sevilla: Etimologías*, Madrid 1982, 37.

[195] *c.* 1 (Vives, *Concilios visigóticos e hispano-romanos*, Barcelona/Madrid 1963, 154).

[196] Claude, *Geschichte der Westgoten*, Stuttgart 1970, 75; García Moreno, *Los Judíos de la España Antigua*, Madrid 1993, 145; Reydellet, *La Royauté dans la littérature latine de Sidoine Apollinaire à Isidore de Séville*, Rome 1981, 555.

[197] *hist.* 58 (Rodríguez Alonso, 268ff.; Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 104f.).

[198] Cazier, *Isidore de Séville et la naissance de l'Espagne catholique*, Paris 1994, 50.

[199] Against Gil, "Judíos y cristianos en la Hispania del siglo VII", *Hispania Sacra* 30 (1977), 4f., who moreover speculates about a proclivity of the Jews towards an "Arian faction", for which there is no evidence either.

[200] Diesner, *Isidor von Sevilla und seine Zeit*, Stuttgart 1973, 38.

[201] *fid. cath.* I, 57 (PL 83, 495).

[202] *Inquirant ergo Iudaei cui dictum est a Domino: Sede a dextris meis* (Ps. 109, 1). *Nunquid archangelo? Non opinor, neque angelo, neque prophetae. … Qui sicut consessu Dei dignus est, ita et natura dignus est, et nomine* (*fid. cath.* I, 57, 1f.; PL 83, 495). The same applies to his assertion that the father gave Christ both his *potestas* and his name (*fid. cath.* I, 1, 7; PL 83, 452).

[203] Séjourné, *Saint Isidore de Séville. Le dernier père de l'église*, Paris 1929, 97. Before recanting at this council, the Syrian bishop Gregory advocated the "Monophysite" position that God had suffered on the cross; Isidore refutes such teaching *etym.* VII, 1, 17. 24. This can be compared to II Seville *c.* 13 (Vives, *Concilios visigóticos e hispano-romanos*, Barcelona/Madrid 1963, 175).

Christ is of the same substance as the Father he does not mention Arian views in *de fide catholica*,[204] which he does not fail to do, however, in the *Etymologies*.[205]

Since the main differences as regards Jewish positions were related to Christ's nature and position, it is no surprise that the Holy Spirit receives comparatively little attention. If a refutation of Arianism had been intended as well, a more extensive discussion of this point might have been expected, because at the end of the Arian period of Visigothic history the equality of Father and Son had been acknowledged by King Leovigild at the Arian synod of 580, while he continued to insist on the inferiority of the Spirit.[206] Apparently Isidore saw no need to prove the divinity of the Spirit in great detail, adducing merely a single biblical prooftext.[207] His insistence on the equality of the three divine persons may be a reflection of Spain's Arian past; he wants to prove the *communio cooperationis* within the Trinity by making even the unusual claim that Father and Spirit together send forth the Son.[208]

Patristic tradition is clearly visible in Isidore's broad discussion of christology and the Trinity. In this respect, the treatise *de fide catholica* is a *summa* of patristic theology, with a particular emphasis on north African tradition.[209] It is unlikely that he was unaware of the anti-Arian implications of his christological exposition; in his youth he had been witness

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[204] *fid. cath.* I, 1, 2 (PL 83, 450).

[205] *etym.* VI, 16, 6.

[206] Collins, *Early Medieval Spain. Unity in Diversity*, New York ²1995, 51 and Joh. Biclar. *chron. ad a.* 580, 2 (Campos, 90): … *gloriam patri per filium in spiritu sancto dari* (*chron.* 58: Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 68).

[207] Job 33, 4. 6 (*fid. cath.* I, 3, 10; PL 83, 457). Tertullian and Cyprian do not discuss the third divine person at all in their works against the Jews. It should be noted that the first part of Isidore's quotation cannot be found either in the Vulgate or in the Septuagint; despite that he repeats precisely this passage in his interpretation.

[208] Based on an interpretation of Is. 48, 12. 13. 16; see *fid. cath.* I, 4, 7 (PL 83, 458f.). Isidore seems to advocate the Hispano-Roman theory of the *filioque* (*fid. cath.* I, 59; PL 83, 496). He clearly states this doctrine *etym.* VII, 3, 1: *ex Patre Filioque procedit*. See also *etym.* VII, 4, 4; *eccl. off.* II, 24, 1 (CCL 113, 99); *dif.* II, 3, 7 (PL 83, 71) and *hist.* 53 (Rodríguez Alonso, 262): (*Recaredus) praedicans … spiritum sanctum inseparabiliter a patre filioque procedere et esse amborum unum spiritum* ("He then proclaimed … the Holy Spirit proceeding inseparably from the Father and Son and being the one Spirit of them both": Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 103). See Ramos Lissón, "Die synodalen Ursprünge des *filioque* im römisch-westgotischen Hispanien", *AHC* 16 (1984), 286–299; Gemeinhardt, *Die Filioque-Kontroverse zwischen Ost- und Westkirche im Frühmittelalter*, Berlin 2002, 49–65.

[209] Isidore states *vir. ill.* XIV (Codoñer, 142) to have read the treatise *de sancta trinitate* by Fulgentius of Ruspe.

to political turmoil in Seville that was connected to strife between Arians and Catholics.[210] The main theological parallel between Arians and Jews was their negation of the (full) divinity of Christ.[211] Arianism had not yet disappeared in the 7th century, something Sisebut was very well aware of when he wrote his "missionary" letter to King Adaloald.[212] Since Isidore's perspective was mainly limited to the Iberian peninsula, such considerations can have played at most a very minor role in his thinking.[213] The christological argument of the first book of *de fide catholica* is therefore implicitly directed against Arian positions as well;[214] however, in the second book Arians play no role whatsoever, since Isidore's ecclesiological exposition of the mission of the gentiles is exclusively directed against the Jews as the "old" people of God, with political undertones against Byzantium as an alleged protector of heretics. Yet the latter are not Arians, but opponents of the council of Chalcedon.

Because of his disregard for Christian heresies in *de fide catholica* Isidore fails to develop criteria for theological orthodoxy; this term is not even used in the course of his argument.[215] Christ is not only

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[210] When Hermenegild was besieged by his Arian father Leovigild in Seville, bishop Leander and probably also his younger brother Isidore were present in the city; cf. Fontaine, "Conversion et culture chez les wisigoths d'Espagne", *La conversione al cristianesimo nell'Europa dell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 14 (1967), 117.

[211] For the relationship of Judaism and Arianism cf. Lorenz, *Arius judaizans? Untersuchungen zur dogmengeschichtlichen Einordnung des Arius*, Göttingen 1979. For the alleged link between homoic Arianism and Jews in orthodox polemics cf. Brennecke, "*Imitatio-reparatio-continuatio*. Die Judengesetzgebung im Ostgotenreich Theoderichs des Großen als *reparatio imperii*?", *ZAC* 4 (2000), 146.

[212] In the *Vitas Patrum Emeritensium*, written in the 630s, the struggle against Arianism plays a major role, but these conflicts are exclusively presented as a past phenomenon.

[213] On this point he differs from Gregory the Great, who dealt with both Gothic and Lombard Arianism; cf. Durliat, "'Normaux' et déviance religieuse d'après la correspondance de Grégoire le Grand", *Religiöse Devianz*, Frankfurt/M. 1990, 69f. The dialogues traditionally attributed to Gregory, which contain a report of Hermenegild's "martyrdom", can be interpreted as a collection of anti-Arian *exempla*; cf. Fontaine, "Conversion et culture chez les wisigoths d'Espagne", *La conversione al cristianesimo nell'Europa dell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 14 (1967), 116 and Reydellet, *La Royauté dans la littérature latine de Sidoine Apollinaire à Isidore de Séville*, Rome 1981, 506 note 2. See also García de la Fuente, "Leovigildo, Hermenegildo, Recaredo y Leandro en los *dialogi* de Gregorio Magno", *Concilio III de Toledo. XIV centenario 589–1989*, Toledo 1991, 393–402.

[214] The theological teachings of Arianism were of course known to Isidore, not only because of the political conflicts of his youth; cf. *hist.* 8 (Rodríguez Alonso, 184; Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 84).

[215] See, however, *etym.* VII, 14, 4f., where orthodoxy is said to be based on the

presented as the one and only hermeneutical key to the scriptures; he is also identified with truth itself.[216] Already Tertullian had argued that heretics were not allowed to use and interpret the Bible because Christ and the apostles had entrusted it exclusively to the bishops of the (Catholic) church as a *regula fidei*.[217] This notion reserves the right to explain the scriptures to the teaching office of the church. Isidore is not as explicit in *de fide catholica*, but he does stress the importance of *apostoli et doctores* for preserving and handing down church teaching.[218] They perform their task mainly by preaching (*Christi gratiam praedicantes*); the preaching office is reserved to the Catholic clergy.[219]

The Catholic church, whose worldwide expansion is particularly important to Isidore's argument regarding the calling of the gentiles and the mission of the gentile church,[220] is said to have been founded by apostolic preaching.[221] An essential prerequisite for teaching and preaching is study,[222] something Isidore wanted to promote by his so-called educational programme. The special importance of preaching is highlighted by the structure he gives to his argument in *de fide catholica*: immediately after discussing the resurrection of Christ he turns to the calling of disciples and apostles, whose activities are, interestingly enough, said to be directed first and foremost at believers, not at the "unfaithful" outside the church.[223] Preaching is presented as the principal way to achieve conversion, which is discussed right after

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correspondence of faith and everyday life. This moral aspect is also present *sent.* II, 3, 2 (CCL 111, 97).

[216] *fid. cath.* II, 13, 3 (PL 83, 519).

[217] Grundmann, "*Oportet et haereses esse. Das Problem der Ketzerei im Spiegel der mittelalterlichen Bibelexegese*", *AKG* 45 (1963), 132f. Tertullian warned against discussing biblical exegesis with heretics (*praescr. haer.* 19, 1; CCL 1, 201).

[218] *fid. cath.* II, 27, 3 (PL 83, 536); following Prov. 9, 1–6. See also his interpretation of Jer. 3, 15 (*fid. cath.* II, 3, 2; PL 83, 506).

[219] See Braulio of Zaragoza's defence against an accusation put forward by Pope Honorius I (638): … *debitum predicationis officium non tacuimus* (*ep.* 21; Riesco Terrero, 110). Cf. González Salinero, *Las conversiones forzosas de los judíos en el reino visigodo*, Rome 2000, 49f.

[220] *sent.* I, 16, 6 (CCL 111, 56); *etym.* VIII, 1, 1. For Isidore's definition of the term "catholic" see *eccl. off.* I, 1, 3 (CCL 113, 4).

[221] *fid. cath.* I, 55, 3f. (PL 83, 494). See also *quaest. in Gen.* 31, 28 (PL 83, 281).

[222] *sent.* III, 35, 1 (CCL 111, 275f.).

[223] James and John are said to have been called *ut praedicationis reti cunctos credentes de profundo saeculi huius extraherent* (*fid. cath.* I, 55, 2; PL 83, 493).

preaching, being presented as a result of it.[224] Only second place is accorded to preaching activities directed at converting the nations.[225]

In all his works Isidore almost always identifies the church with the gentile church.[226] Only rarely does he mention Jewish Christians.[227] He only recognizes their existence in apostolic times, which entails their stigmatization as "Judaizers" or heretics in later periods; however, this topic does not occupy a prominent place in Isidore's thinking. When he interprets Noah's three sons in the *quaestiones*, he takes the eldest one to represent the patriarchs, prophets and apostles (i.e. the Jewish "Christians" of the biblical period) and the youngest one as a type of the gentile church; the second one (Ham) is referred to the Jews of the present and also to heretics and "bad" Christians.[228] Contemporary members of the church observing Old Testament precepts are numbered among heretics.[229] Significantly, this argument is lacking in *de fide catholica*.

The numeral "one" is used as a *leitmotif* in Isidore's description of the incorporation of the gentiles into the one and only church.[230] This idea of unity, which was also stressed by his brother Leander in his concluding sermon at the 3rd council of Toledo, corresponds to the one God, the one people of God, the one and only faith, in short, the *sacramentum unitatis*.[231] Isidore sought to establish unity of church practice, liturgy and canon law in the Visigothic church, at least in his diocese. Unlike authors such as Eusebius of Caesarea, he does not identify the one church or the one people of God with the Roman empire,[232] because he denies any special function to the contemporary Byzantine empire, which entailed his repudiation of the theory of the four monarchies in

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[224] Augustine considered conversion to be the main aim of preaching (*doctr. christ.* IV, 24, 53; CCL 32, 159). See also *s.* 18, 5 (CCL 41, 250).

[225] *fid. cath.* I, 55, 2 (PL 83, 493). Already the acts of the council of Valencia (546) report conversions as a result of preaching (*c.* 1; Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica IV, 314). Gregory the Great attributed the conversion of Hermenegild to Leander's sermons; he also advocated this way for mission among the Jews: ... *quos dulcedo praedicationis ... ad credendum invitare poterat* (*ep.* I, 34; CCL 140, 42).

[226] *all.* 74 (PL 83, 111). See *supra*, p. 146.

[227] *all.* 93. 155 (PL 83, 113. 118).

[228] *quaest. in Gen.* 8 (PL 83, 235 ff.).

[229] *etym.* VIII, 5, 9.

[230] *fid. cath.* II, 1, 3 (PL 83, 499).

[231] *pro.* 92 (PL 83, 176); *all.* 221 (PL 83, 127); for the unity of the church see also *quaest. in Ex.* 15, 3 (PL 83, 295).

[232] For the theological interpretation of the *pax Romana* by Eusebius cf. Olster, *Roman Defeat, Christian Response, and the Literary Construction of the Jew*, Philadelphia 1994, 33.

the *Chronicle*.[233] The conversion of the Goths is seen as part and parcel of this unifying mission of the church. All the faithful are to be united in the church,[234] but no more in the Roman empire; the people of God is conceptualized theologically, not politically, which of course entails a devaluation of political rights such as Roman citizenship. An analysis of Isidore's *de laude Spaniae*, the initial chapter of the *History of the Goths*, shows that he unequivocally identified with his Spanish *patria*, which he considered to be the principal proponent of orthodoxy and the guardian of the mission entrusted to the church.[235]

In the *sententiae* Isidore is more explicit about the parallels between Jews and heretics. In contrast to the worldwide expansion of the Catholic church and to its mission among the nations, heretics are confined to specific groups and regions only.[236] His charge that heretics refuse to join the community of the people of God, choosing "private societies" instead, could easily be directed against Jews, too, who were traditionally blamed for their alleged particularism.[237] It is significant that Isidore directs the charge of blindness, which had traditionally been hurled against the Jews from the New Testament onwards, against heretics, too.[238] He goes even further, blaming heretics for understanding Old Testament precepts literally, which brings them even closer to the Jews.[239] In the final analysis he considers everybody who deviates from apostolic teaching in religious practice or biblical exegesis to be an Antichrist.[240]

According to Isidore's definitions in the 8th book of the *Etymologies* (*de Ecclesia et sectis*), heretics have seceded from the church;[241] the resulting schism brings about a division of christendom, but not of the church.[242] Heretics deviate from received tradition, choosing teachings of their

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[233] Reydellet, "Les intentions idéologiques et politiques dans la chronique d'Isidore de Séville", *MAH* 82 (1970), 393f.

[234] *fid. cath.* II, 1, 4 (PL 83, 499f.).

[235] For an analysis of *de laude Spaniae* see now Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville. Genèse et originalité de la culture hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*, Turnhout 2000, 361–377.

[236] *sent.* I, 16, 6 (CCL 111, 56).

[237] *fid. cath.* II, 1, 6 (PL 83, 500). The Jews allegedly keep God to themselves (*fid. cath.* II, 1, 7; PL 83, 500).

[238] *sent.* I, 16, 8 (CCL 111, 57).

[239] *sent.* I, 16, 13 (CCL 111, 58).

[240] *sent.* I, 25, 1 (CCL 111, 79).

[241] *etym.* VIII, 5, 1: *Haeretici, qui de Ecclesia recesserunt.* He provides an etymological explanation of the Greek term *ecclesia* in *de ecclesiasticis officiis*: *Ecclesia autem vocatur proprie, propter quod omnes ad se vocet et in unum congreget* (*eccl. off.* I, 1, 2; CCL 113, 4).

[242] For internal divisions in christendom cf. *etym.* VI, 16, 3.

own liking.[243] Unlike later authors, Isidore never refers to Judaism as
such as being a heresy;[244] when discussing different heresies he mentions
not only Christian, but also Jewish ones, which are thought to have
seceded from "proper" Judaism. He names various groups from the
time of the second temple; however, due to his ignorance of Jewish
tradition he is unaware of the fact that in that period there was no
normative form of Judaism; the groups he names (Pharisees, Sadducees,
Essenes, Samaritans) can to a greater or lesser degree be described
as traditions that developed within Judaism. When comparing them
to Christian heresies, Isidore once more applies Christian models and
patterns to Judaism, ignoring the entirely different concept of norm and
tradition in the two religions.

The charge of heresy can be based on different accusations. Heretics
are blamed for conspiring against the (Catholic) church or for inter-
preting the Bible in a heterodox way.[245] This understanding again paves
the way for associating Judaism with heresy because of the traditional
hermeneutic controversies over the exegesis of the Old Testament.[246]
Not only against the Jews is Christ presented as the one and only key
to the true understanding of scripture; this claim is also addressed to
Christian heretics, whose moral qualities and good works are said to be
of no avail if they lack Christ and his faith, who is allegedly only present
in Catholic teaching. The supposed futility of good works is mentioned,
although in different texts, with regard to both heretics and Jews.[247]

According to this concept of grace, Jews and heretics find themselves
in analogous positions within the divine economy of salvation. Christ as
the key to understanding the Bible and to divine grace; salvation is said
to be present in the Catholic church only. This identity of Catholic faith
and salvation was also stressed at the 2nd council of Seville in 619,[248] and

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[243] *etym.* VIII, 3, 1.

[244] For the high middle ages cf. Patschovsky, "Feindbilder der Kirche. Juden und
Ketzer im Vergleich", *Juden und Christen zur Zeit der Kreuzzüge*, Sigmaringen 1999, 327–
357.

[245] *etym.* VIII, 5, 70.

[246] … *ne eam aut iudaeus intellegat, aut hereticus quia non est Christi discipulus* (*sent.* III, 12, 3;
CCL 111, 234).

[247] For the Jews see *fid. cath.* II, 22, 2 (PL 83, 530). The biblical passage discussed here,
which is in fact Is. 57, 11 f., is used in the *sententiae* to prove the uselessness of good works
performed by heretics, because outside the Catholic church there is said to be no grace;
cf. *sent.* I, 16, 12 (CCL 111, 58). For the alleged futility of fasts and prayers of Jews and
heretics cf. *sent.* III, 7, 21 (CCL 111, 225).

[248] *c.* 13 (Vives, *Concilios visigóticos e hispano-romanos*, Barcelona/Madrid 1963, 184),

it is a cornerstone of the argument in *de fide catholica*.[249] Because they lack faith in Christ, Isidore puts heretics, Jews, and pagans into one and the same category, that of error.[250]

The Catholic church is repeatedly described as the all-encompassing community of the faithful, which is exegetically deduced from Isaiah's vision of the messianic kingdom of peace.[251] It should be noted that Isidore interprets this prophetic vision in political terms, indicating that princes and subject peoples adhere to the same doctrine. It is unlikely that this is an allusion to the conversion of the Goths, since it would have been problematic to refer to the Hispano-Roman population, who included people of senatorial rank (Isidore's own family being one of them), as subjects, who are moreover qualified as *plebs*. Nonetheless this powerful image of the messianic kingdom highlights the "messianic" role of the church, which opens the door of salvation to all nations, but which also dignifies such peoples on a political level, on which they become an active part of salvation history. The church replaces the Roman empire in ennobling "Barbarian" peoples by assigning them a place in "world" history and in the community of "civilized" nations.

The church is built on its teaching (*doctrina*), which is not limited to church dogma, also encompassing the Bible and its exegesis.[252] The Catholic church is seen as the heir of the teaching of both parts of the Bible, of Christ and of the fathers. The unity of the Bible is linked to the unity of the church and of the people of God, all of which is held together by the faith of Christ.

In contrast to his claim that the gentiles were called to faith even before the Jews, Isidore declares that Christ founded his church among

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quoting Fulgentius of Ruspe, *ep.* 17, 3 (CCL 91, 564). See also *sent.* I, 16, 13 (CCL 111, 58).

[249] *Eius vox non audietur foris, hoc est, in haeresibus, et Iudaeis extra Dei Ecclesiam positis* (*fid. cath.* II, 2, 8; PL 83, 505).

[250] *sent.* I, 16, 15 (CCL 111, 59). For a parallelization of Judaism and heresy see also *quaest. in Gen.* 31, 31 (PL 83, 281).

[251] *fid. cath.* I, 9, 8–10 (PL 83, 466f.).

[252] *doctrina Testamentorum* (*fid. cath.* II, 23, 1; PL 83, 530). Ideal doctrine is described as follows: … *si tantum sana sobriaque doctrina considerentur* (*nat. rer. praef.* 2; Fontaine, 14f.). There are some parallels in Augustine; cf. *doctr. christ.* IV, 31, 64 (CCL 32, 167); *ep.* 98, 5 (CSEL 34/2, 527); *fid. et op.* V, 7 (CSEL 41, 42). At the end of his *renotatio* Braulio mentions Isidore's *sana doctrina*. In a similar way Ildefonse of Toledo concludes his chapter on Isidore (Ild. Tol. *vir. ill.* VIII; Codoñer, 128).

the nations after he had turned away from the Jews.[253] God's new people, the church, is presented as the guardian of truth, keeping out error and dissident teaching.[254] The sublimity of the church is founded on the condemnation of the Jews.[255] Isidore exclusively conceptualizes the church of the present as a church of gentiles, he knows nothing of contemporary Jewish Christians. Judaism is seen as a religion or faith that can be deposed of at baptism; Jewish converts thus become members of the "gentile" church, they loose their Jewish background, becoming indistinguishable from other Christians.

In the early church there were a number of controversies about so-called Judaizing Christians.[256] Polemics against such Christians are especially intense in the sermons of John Chrysostom against the Jews, which he preached in 386 and 387 in Antioch, one of the capitals of the hellenistic world, which was home to a vibrant Jewish community exerting a powerful attraction on some Christians.[257] Chrysostom perceived this as a vital threat to Christian identity.[258] There is evidence for contacts between Jews and Christians on the Iberian peninsula stretching from Roman to Islamic times. At the beginning of the 4th century the fathers of the council of Elvira condemned such contacts in four canons, fearing not only the influence Jewish neighbours might have on their Christian flock but also a blurring of differences between Jews and Christians.[259] At this council, meeting in pre-Constantinian times,

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[253] *fid. cath.* II, 7, 2 (PL 83, 512).

[254] *fid. cath.* II, 8, 2 (PL 83, 513).

[255] *fid. cath.* II, 12, 4 (PL 83, 518).

[256] Déroche, "Judaizantes", *RAC* 19 (2001), 130–142.

[257] Chrysostom preached eight sermons *adversus Iudaeos* (PG 48, 843–942). See the translation by Harkins, *Saint John Chrysostom. Discourses against Judaizing Christians*, Washington 1979. For "Judaizers" in the middle Byzantine period see Dagron, "Judaïser", *Travaux et Mémoires du Collège de France. Centre de Recherche d'Histoire en Civilisation de Byzance* 11 (1991), 359–380.

[258] For the historical context cf. Simon, "La polémique antijuive de saint Jean Chrysostome et le mouvement judaïsant d'Antioche", *Recherches d'histoire judéo-chrétienne*, Paris 1962, 140–153; Meeks/Wilken, *Jews and Christians in Antioch in the First Four Centuries of the Common Era*, Missoula 1978; Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews. Rhetoric and Reality in the Late Fourth Century*, Berkeley *et al.* 1983 and Malingrey, "La controverse antijudaïque dans l'œuvre de Jean Chrysostome d'après le discours de *l'Adversus Judeos*", *De l'antijudaïsme antique à l'antisémitisme contemporain*, Lille 1979, 87–104.

[259] *Cc.* 16. 49. 50. 78 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica hispana IV, Madrid 1984, 247. 257f. 267). See Linder, *The Jews in Legal Sources of the Early Middle Ages*, Detroit/Jerusalem 1997, 482–484; Carlos del Valle, "El concilio de Elvira", *La controversia judeocristiana en España*, Madrid 1998, 13–19 and Sotomayor, "Las actas del concilio de Elvira. Estado de la cuestión", *Spania*, Barcelona 1996, 251–266.

the bishops were concerned about Christian identity and the standing of Christians in the eyes of pagans. They decreed separation from the Jews especially in matters touching upon meals, matrimonies and blessings of fields. This is an indication that contacts in these areas of everyday life were frequent, which was perceived by ecclesiastical authorities as a potential threat to the integrity of Christianity and to their own influence on the faithful.

Also under Islamic rule, contacts between Jews and Christians are mentioned in the sources. People from abroad visiting Spain especially objected to common meals, as did the Frankish bishop Egila, who was sent from Rome at the end of the 8th century.[260] At the beginning of that 8th century archdeacon Evantius of Toledo wrote a work against a group of Christian "Judaizers" active in Zaragoza, whose "litteral" observation of biblical precepts is, however, not attributed explicitly to close contacts with Jews.[261] In view of the great interval of time and of the numerous political changes that occurred between these instances it would be unreasonable to assume an unbroken continuity of close Jewish-Christian contacts. Nonetheless the similarity between the practices that aroused objection, namely common meals, shows that "Mozarabic" Christians in the early Islamic period did not hold an outright anti-Jewish position, and neither had Hispano-Roman Christians of the pre-Constantinian epoch. The contacts criticized by Egila were made possible by the conditions of Ummayad rule, but the question needs to be asked what preconditions were laid during the Visigothic period. In this context it should be remembered that 7th-century councils repeatedly censured Visigothic clergy for the support they gave Jews in breach of the law; the very repetition of such injunctions clearly testifies to their futility. "Judaizing" Christians are mentioned in various regions of late antiquity and the early middle ages, therefore it would be unusual for Visigothic Spain if there were no such tendencies, on whatever level and to whatever extent. The stark regional differences prevailing on the Iberian peninsula and the varying density of Jewish population make it impossible to assume any coherent pattern of behaviour shown by Visigothic Christians towards Jews. The argument

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[260] Schäferdiek, "Der adoptianische Streit im Rahmen der spanischen Kirchengeschichte", *Schwellenzeit. Beiträge zur Geschichte des Christentums in Spätantike und Frühmittelalter*, Berlin/New York 1996, 386.

[261] *De scripturis divinis edita contra eos qui putant inmundum esse sanguinem*, ed. Juan Gil, Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum I, Madrid 1973, 1–5. The author objects to the "carnal" observation of precepts from the Old Testament *Iudaico quodam more* (ibid. 2).

from silence is certainly no proof for the existence of "Judaizing" trends in Isidore's time, but in view of the political situation of the early 7th century it is remarkable that he never confronted any such tendencies.

Isidore tries to prove that the ceremonial law of the Old Testament was fulfilled by Christ; therefore its continued observation in the present is said to contradict God's intentions. However, his argument stays at the exegetical and dogmatic level; Isidore does not voice any criticism of Christians who actually observe ritual laws of the Old Testament, whether as a result of independent Bible study or of Jewish "influence". There are several possible reasons for this lack of practical criticism. The treatise *de fide catholica* is not a sermon bearing marks of the contemporary situation, such as Chrysostom's sermons *adversus Iudaeos*. On the other hand, it is possible to speculate that "Judaizing" tendencies were so rare that Isidore did not think it worthwhile to direct his polemics against them. If this were so, the situation would have changed radically after Sisebut's forced conversions because baptized Jews who continued to observe laws and customs of the religion of their fathers were branded as "Judaizers". Precisely for this reason it is striking that Isidore's chapter on Jewish dietary laws in his anti-Jewish treatise is very short, without any warning against a continued observation of the practices mentioned.[262] One might conclude from this that the treatise was composed either before the forced baptisms or shortly afterwards, when the problem of "relapsing" Jews had not yet become acute. Another solution to the problem of Isidore's silence on these points may be his indebtedness to the *adversus Iudaeos* tradition, which may have induced him to refrain from drawing parallels to contemporary events. This last hypothesis is, however, invalidated by the "novelty" he introduces into his argument, namely the above mentioned reference to the mysterious Jewish king in the east. The fact that he takes up this new, contemporary Jewish argument shows that he did not categorically oppose a discussion of contemporary problems; in spite of his mainly stereotypical view of Jews and Judaism his argument is not exclusively symbolical and hermeneutic. The treatise *de fide catholica* should therefore be dated either before or shortly after the forced baptisms, which is in keeping with the traditional method based on Braulio's list of Isidore's works.[263]

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[262] *fid. cath.* II, 18.
[263] See *supra*, p. 38.

Nowhere does Isidore create the impression that he was troubled by contemporary heresies; it appears that he thought the Catholic church to be relatively secure, although he insisted on the necessity to keep apostolic teaching pure and uncorrupted. Unlike his brother and predecessor, he did not write works against heretics; he seems to have thought that an exposition of Catholic doctrine and sustained efforts to increase the level of culture and education among Visigothic Christians were sufficient to stabilize the church and to instill a knowledge of Catholic faith in the faithful, both clergy and laity. In order to construct an image of Christian identity on Gothic terms, he uses "only" Jews as a backdrop, but not heretics. In doing this, he initiated a tradition that should prove fateful for Visigothic history.

3.6. *The theological position of Jews and Judaism in Isidore's entire corpus*

Judaism receives very uneven attention in Isidore's works. There is quite a number of references to alleged Jewish positions in his theological writings, but these are lacking in other texts. It is striking that he does not mention anti-Jewish actions or statements in a single author or politician discussed in *de viris illustribus*, even though this would have been possible in at least a few notorious cases such as John Chrysostom's or Justinian's.[264] This is doubtless due to his sources, but it is a clear indication that Isidore's interest was not focussed on filling possible gaps concerning Jews or anti-Jewish activities in his material. He mentions that some of Chrysostom's works were available in Latin translation, but apparently his sermons *adversus Iudaeos* did not belong to that category;[265] Isidore limits his remarks on Chrysostom to the latter's works on questions of moral theology. When discussing the emperor Justinian, he might have included a reference to the imperial legislation against the Jews, if he had considered that topic worth mentioning, all the more so as in this case there was no problem of translation, most

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[264] In Arévalo's edition reproduced by Migne there are some chapters at the beginning of the treatise that have not been included in Codoñer's edition; in the chapters on Macrobius (*vir. ill.* II; PL 83, 1084) and Philastrius (*vir. ill.* III; ibid.) the attitude of both concerning the Jews is touched upon in passing.

[265] He says twice that not all of Chrysostom's works were available in Latin; cf. *vir. ill.* VI (Codoñer, 137f.).

of the *Codex Iustinianus* and the *novellae* being available in Latin.[266] In no case does Isidore base the standing of a "famous man" on anti-Jewish activities.

The treatise *de ortu et obitu patrum* is devoted to a discussion of biblical figures. Repeatedly Isidore adduces Jewish aggadic traditions, which he takes over from patristic sources, mainly Jerome. It is telling, however, that he does not refrain from adding stereotypical anti-Jewish statements.[267] In *de ecclesiasticis officiis* he limits his remarks on Judaism to the differences between current church practice and Old Testament ritual law. His main intention is to point out the characteristics of church liturgy and Christian holidays.[268] It should be noted that the Jews' insistence on traditional customs is not criticized outright; some of their observances are recognized as being time-honoured and based on biblical injunctions.[269]

In the *sententiae*, Isidore's theological *summa*, Judaism receives comparatively little attention. In the chapter *de ecclesia et haeresibus* he mentions heretics and pagans as opponents of the church, but not Jews.[270] When he highlights the importance of patience and of sharpening argumentative skills in theological controversies, he only refers to disputes with pagans.[271] The very marginal importance attached to Judaism in the *sententiae* emerges from the fact that in the chapter on the Antichrist the synagogue is only mentioned in a single sentence in rather traditional fashion,[272] while the eschatological raging of devil and Antichrist

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[266] The famous *nov. Iust.* 146, discussing the synagogue service and questions of faith, exists both in Latin and Greek, whereas *nov. Iust.* 37 (*de Africana ecclesia*) is only available in Latin, since is deals with problems that arose in the western parts of the empire.

[267] When discussing the death of Isaiah, he mentions a Jewish tradition according to which the prophet was killed. In contrast to Jerome Isidore introduces the topos of Jewish blindness in this context (*ort. et obit.* 37, 3; Chaparro Gómez, 165); the source is Jerome, *in Is.* I, 1, 10.

[268] *eccl. off.* I, 32, 8 (CCL 113, 38).

[269] *eccl. off.* I, 10, 1 (CCL 113, 8f.); the use of the present tense should be noted, in contrast to the description of Jewish feasts in the past tense *etym.* VI, 18, 9–12. For a positive assessment of Jewish traditions see also the allegorical interpretation of the parable of the lost son (*all.* 216; PL 83, 126).

[270] *sent.* I, 16, 2 (CCL 111, 55). There are only two cases in the *sententiae* where he discusses Jews and heretics together; *sent.* III, 7, 21 (CCL 111, 225) he claims that both groups would fast and pray in vain, and *sent.* III, 12, 3 (CCL 111, 234) he repeats the traditional reproach that a Jew or a heretic cannot understand the scriptures correctly, *quia non est Christi discipulus*, i.e. because they lack Christ as the appropriate key.

[271] *sent.* I, 16, 5 (CCL 111, 55f.). The same applies to *sent.* II, 2, 15 (CCL 111, 96) where only heretics are numbered among the enemies of faith.

[272] *sent.* I, 25, 6 (CCL 111, 80).

is described without any further reference to the Jews. This may be due to the fact that at the end of the chapter the final condemnation of the devil is implied,[273] whereas the Jews are elsewhere said to convert at the end of times.[274] This may be the reason why Jews are not mentioned in the chapter on the punishment of the unfaithful;[275] Isidore counts on their conversion and salvation, so that they do not belong to the eschatological group of the unfaithful.[276] In the *sententiae*, attention is clearly focussed on Catholic Christians; therefore neither Jews nor heretics are mentioned in the chapter on those who will be deserted by God (*sent.* II, 15), even though they might have been included in the exposition of the conversion of sinners. It is especially noteworthy that the topos of the dog that returns to its vomit, which had traditionally been applied to the Jews, is referred in this case to relapsing sinners in general.[277]

An analysis of the *Etymologies* renders no coherent picture of Isidore's assessment of Jews. There are ethnographic traditions that were common currency in antiquity (e.g. references to circumcision), but there are also hostile statements such as the etymological interpretation of the name Barrabas, associating the Jews with the devil.[278] A similar passage is found in the *sententiae*, where Isidore calls the Jews sons of the devil in one place.[279] A hostile statement such as this is found nowhere in *de fide catholica*; the author does not quote the related passages John 8, 44, Apc. 2, 9 and Apc. 3, 9, but it has to be recalled that in this treatise he hardly ever uses quotations from the New Testament, and the Apocalypse is not used at all, even though the canonical standing of this book was expressly vindicated at the 4th council of Toledo (*c.* 17). In the *Etymologies* Isidore does adduce John 8, 44 ("You belong to

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[273] *sent.* I, 25, 9 (CCL 111, 81).

[274] For each and every individual there is hope for divine grace and conversion until the very end; cf. *sent.* II, 14, 4–8 (CCL 111, 125f.). *Mutatis mutandis* this applies also to the Jews, who are said to convert before the end; therefore they can hope for forgiveness and salvation.

[275] *sent.* I, 29, 1–7 (CCL 111, 87ff.).

[276] See his discussion of repentance *eccl. off.* II, 17, 8f. (CCL 113, 82).

[277] *sent.* II, 16, 2 (CCL 111, 129); for the application of this topos to Jews see the acts of the council of Agde, *c.* 34 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica IV, 135). Another instance where Isidore declines to make an anti-Jewish point is *sent.* II, 41, 5 (CCL 111, 181), where he discusses earthly greed.

[278] *etym.* VII, 10, 10. The interpretation of the Aramaic name is certainly not Isidore's own; the hostile statement that follows may be due to him, but since there is no coherent argument that would follow from this explanation it is more likely that the whole is taken from other sources.

[279] *sent.* I, 16, 17 (CCL 111, 59).

your father, the devil") in the course of his discussion of various forms
of father-son-relationships; this anti-Jewish topos is already found in his
source, Augustine.[280] In the *quaestiones* he also alludes to the alleged link
of the Jews with the devil when he presents an allegorical interpretation
of the brothers Jacob and Esau.[281]

Jews are most often mentioned in Isidore's exegetical works, prin-
cipally the *allegoriae* and *quaestiones*, where hostile statements are much
more numerous than in his historical and systematic expositions. Con-
cerning the alleged relationship of the Jews to the Antichrist, there is
only a single reference in the *sententiae*, as indicated above, which is in
the future tense. By contrast, in his exegetical works Isidore claims far
more often that the Jews serve the Antichrist, and, what is more, he
makes this allegation in the present tense.[282] In the *quaestiones*, where he
shows no reluctance to use prooftexts from the New Testament, he also
adduces Apc. 2, 9 ("I know the slander of those who say they are Jews
and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan") when discussing the alleged
relationship of the Jews to the Antichrist.[283] Yet in *de fide catholica* he
never calls the Jews servants of the Antichrist, in contrast to canon 66
of the 4th council of Toledo, which warns Christians not to serve Jews:
Nefas est enim ut membra Christi serviant Antichristi ministris.[284] The 58th canon
of the same council refers to laymen and clergy who accept bribes from
Jews as being *ex corpore Antichristi.*[285] The alleged relationship of the Jews
to diabolical forces is therefore discussed in very uneven degree in dif-
ferent texts; it is remarkable that such an allegation precisely does not
appear in the treatise against the Jews.

In none of his texts does Isidore sketch the image of Jews as being
a source of danger for contemporary Christians. This conclusion is
true on two levels. First, the warning against "Judaizing" practices,
which according to some patristic, although not Visigothic, authors
were allegedly due to excessively close contact with Jews, is made with-

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[280] *etym.* IX, 5, 15 (Reydellet, 193); the source is Aug. *c. Adim.* 5 (CSEL 25/1, 124).
[281] *quaest. in Gen.* 23, 5 (PL 83, 256); see already Just. Mart. *dial.* 131, 2 (Marcovich,
296) and John Chrysostom, *adv. Iud.* II, 3; IV, 7; VIII, 8 (PG 48, 861. 881. 939). For the
high middle ages see Trachtenberg, *The Devil and the Jews. The Medieval Conception of the
Jew and its Relation to Modern Antisemitism*, New Haven 1943.
[282] *all.* 93 (PL 83, 113). The fusion of different time spheres in the exegetical works is
based on the assumption that the economy of salvation is unchangeable (*quaest. in Iud.*
6, 9; PL 83, 388).
[283] *quaest. in Iud.* 6, 3 (PL 83, 386f.).
[284] Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 241.
[285] Ibid., 236.

out any particular emphasis.[286] Isidore's warning in the *quaestiones* is not related to any contemporary context, which endorses the hypothesis that this work is rather a summary of traditional exegesis without any particular thematic focus or interest. When discussing the sabbath in *de ecclesiasticis officiis* Isidore does not warn against "Judaizing" either.[287] Unlike John Chrysostom, he does not denounce such practices, in fact he does not even mention them. Second, he does not claim that the Jews persecute Christians or constitute a danger for their lives; the latter allegation was only made in western Europe after the 12th century. Isidore clearly refers to the persecution of Christians by Jews as being a phenomenon of the past and of the eschatological future, but not of the present.[288]

Isidore often uses the term *Hebraei* without any negative connotation, while *Iudaei* and especially *synagoga* do have a negative undertone. In *de natura rerum* he deduces several customs of the "Hebrews" from the Old Testament, often relying on the works of other church fathers. At times, he explicitly refers to the *traditio Hebraeorum*, polemicizing at the same time against *Iudaei*.[289] In the *allegoriae* the negative understanding of *synagoga* is particularly prominent: the synagogue is said to be seduced by the devil[290] and to have crucified Christ.[291] Although Christ is credited with having founded the synagogue among the Jews, it is said to have turned barren and unfruitful.[292]

Isidore's assessment of the Jews is always very much influenced by the context of his argument; not always is he carried away by theological prejudice. When comparing Hebrew and "pagan" cultural traditions in the *Etymologies* he does not deny the allegedly higher age of the former, unconsciously repeating claims first developed in hellenistic

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[286] *quaest. in Dtn.* 6, 1 (PL 83, 361).

[287] *eccl. off.* I, 25 (CCL 113, 28f.). Isidore rather wants to highlight the greater dignity of the Sunday, in keeping with his tendency to prove the primary call of the gentiles in his exegetical works. The warning against "Judaizing" is much more prominent in the one canon extant from the so-called 3rd council of Seville, which took place, if this ascription is true, under Isidore's presidency (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 484). See *infra*, p. 220f..

[288] *sent.* I, 25, 6 (CCL 111, 80); see also *ort. et obit.* 68, 4 (Chaparro Gómez, 201). For past instances when Christians were persecuted by Jews cf. *quaest. in Gen.* 23, 14 (PL 83, 257) and *pro.* 94 (PL 83, 177).

[289] *quaest. in Gen.* 20, 3 (PL 83, 253).

[290] *all.* 51 (PL 83, 108).

[291] *all.* 81 (PL 83, 112).

[292] *all.* 213 (PL 83, 125).

Jewish apologetics.[293] It is remarkable that he still clings to this tradition, even though in his time there were no longer controversies between Christians and exponents of philosophical paganism, against which the church had repeatedly pointed to the ancient tradition of the Jewish people in order to present itself as a traditional, ancient religion, relying on the theory of the "true Israel". For Isidore, these claims had no longer practical, apologetic significance, but they had apparently become part of cultural tradition; therefore he transmitted them to posterity, even though they might have provided a basis for suggesting the superiority of Judaism over the *gentes*, something that would have been in blatant contradiction to Isidore's most cherished values. He does not seem to have been troubled by such fears, which may be an indication for a certain self-confidence; he did not regard Judaism as so dangerous that it would have appeared necessary to suppress the above-mentioned classical traditions.

Isidore's principal exegetical work, the *quaestiones in Vetus Testamentum*, is especially well suited for a comparative analysis of his positions on Jews and Judaism. This commentary on the historical books of the Old Testament has no systematic character, but since the exegesis follows the model of the multiple sense of scriptures, Jews are mentioned in a greater number of cases as one would expect in an exposition of the historical sense only. The following analysis will focus on two problems: the relationship between Jews and gentiles and the accusation of deicide.

The most important New Testament text concerning the relationship between Jews and gentiles, the Pauline parable of the olive tree (Rom. 11), is not mentioned explicitly anywhere in Isidore's entire œuvre; nowhere does he interpret the image of the olive tree as a metaphor for the people of God. The oleaster is mentioned only in the *Etymologies*, being discussed merely in the context of natural history (xvii, 7, 61–74). In *de fide catholica* the author does adduce a quotation from Rom. 11, 25 f. ("Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the gentiles has come in"[294]), but he does not attribute it to Paul but to Isaiah, probably because Paul refers to this prophet in Rom. 11, 26b. What is more, in his interpretation Isidore claims that the gentiles were

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[293] *etym.* I, 39, 11. See also the temporal sequence in the following remark: *Apud illos* (sc. *Hebraeos) enim prius dictum est aleph, deinde ex simili enuntiatione apud Graecos tractum est alpha* (*etym.* I, 3, 4).

[294] *Donec plenitudo gentium introeat, et sic omnis Israel salvus fiat* (*fid. cath.* II, 4, 1; PL 83, 508).

called to faith before the Jews, which is an outright inversion of Paul's intentions, since the apostle points out that gentile Christians are only grafted secondarily into Israel.[295] In contrast to Augustine, who repeatedly refers to these Pauline notions, Isidore mainly sticks to Old Testament passages, focusing not on the ongoing theological significance of Israel, but on that of the gentiles. It is no surprise, therefore, that he does not mention the Pauline warning against arrogance towards the Jews anywhere in his works (Rom. 11, 18: "Do not boast over those branches"). The focus on the gentiles is prominent in all of Isidore's works; in his historiographical writings he describes the replacement of the Romans by the christianized and civilized "Barbarians", and in his exegetical and dogmatic treatises he justifies the supersession of the Jews by the gentiles. He mainly uses the term *gentes*, possibly because it was familiar from the Latin Bible, but in addition he also uses *populi* and *nationes*.[296]

The verse Rom. 11, 25 only appears once in *de fide catholica*, but several times in the *quaestiones*. When interpreting the binding of Isaac, Isidore quotes Abraham's words to his servants (Gen. 22, 5): "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you."[297] In this context the verse from Romans ("Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the gentiles has come in") is meant to explain why the servants are requested to wait for the return of their master. Isidore's interpretation is limited to the second part of the Pauline quotation, which he refers to ecclesiastical preaching among the nations. He does not interpret the notion of returning, ending apodictically with the final quote "and so all Israel will be saved". The author is thus merely interested in proving that the nations are called to faith; in spite of the fact that there is hardly any basis for this in the Old Testament text, this idea receives special attention in his exegesis. The salvation of Israel, which could easily have been linked to the image of returning, is only mentioned subsequently, without interpretation. It is open to question whether Isidore understands *Israel* in this place as referring to the Jews or to the church as the "true Israel".

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[295] For patristic and medieval exegesis of this passage cf. Caubet Iturbe, "*Et sic omnis Israel salvus fieret* (Rom. 11, 26). Su interpretación por los escritores cristianos de los siglos III–XII", *Estudios Bíblicos* 21 (1962), 127–150.

[296] For a combination of the three terms cf. *quaest. in Gen.* 2, 10 (PL 83, 214) and *eccl. off.* I, 11, 7 (CCL 113, 11).

[297] *quaest. in Gen.* 18, 8f. (PL 83, 250).

When discussing the blessing of Isaac over his sons, Isidore quotes Rom. 11, 25 f. a second time. The author stresses that the elder son is not excluded from the paternal blessing, even though he is discriminated against in favour of his younger brother.[298] In this case there is no doubt that *Israel* refers to the Jews and not the church. According to Isidore's interpretation, the blessing of the elder son Esau is a hint to the past fertility and former earthly power of the Jews, as well as to the words of God entrusted to them, the Old Testament. Subsequently he mentions a number of traditional anti-Jewish topoi: the Jews are said to have killed Christ and some prophets and to have persecuted Christians, therefore they have to serve them in the present. But there is hope for the future: the Jews will convert to Christ and shake off the yoke of the law: … *iam non servus populi minoris, sed per fidem frater vocaberis*. Accordingly, the Jews are called to faith as are the gentiles, both are heirs of the divine promises; in the eschatological future both parts of God's people will have the same rank. This interpretation is much more in line with the sense of the Pauline text than the first one.

The same can be said with regard to the third passage quoting Rom. 11, 25 f. It is at the beginning of an interpretation of the story of Joseph, being meant to summarize the preceding statements.[299] Isidore compares the reunion of Joseph with his elder brother Juda to the end of times: Joseph, the true Christ, is received by his brother, who had been possessed by *perfidia*, but who is now cleansed by *confessio*.[300] In the same way Christ is said to receive the Jewish people not according to its merits, but proportionate with his grace. By laying his hands upon the Jews he will take their blindness away, so that those who did not believe in him at the outset will do so in the end. In the beginning it is not clear what actually brings about the *confessio* of the elder brother, but in the final passage Isidore makes it clear that Christ himself will effect this conversion. Finally, the author adduces the Pauline quotation, *Israel* being clearly referred to the Jews.

The fourth passage where Isidore quotes Rom. 11, 25 f. is similar to the third one, where the verse is adduced as a summary of the preced-

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[298] *quaest. in Gen.* 23, 12 (PL 83, 257).

[299] *quaest. in Gen.* 30, 32 f. (PL 83, 276).

[300] For the association *Iudaeus—confessor* see de Lange, *Origen and the Jews*, Cambridge 1976, 160 note 29. Origen restricted the use of this etymology to *Ioudaia* and *Ioudas*, but Latin tradition may go back to his explanation. For the deduction of this thought by Isidore cf. *etym.* VII, 7, 10 (with interpretation of Gen. 29, 35). See also *etym.* VIII, 4, 1: *Iudaei confessores interpretantur. Multos enim ex eis sequitur confessio, quos antea perfidia possidebat.*

ing exposition. Interpreting Moses's leprous hand, Isidore declares that God's people has become unclean.[301] But as that hand became clean again, the people of God also will be saved: *Sed revocabit eam, et redibit ad pristinum colorem, dum agnoverit Dominum Salvatorem.* This is followed by the Pauline quotation, without any further interpretation. The conjunction *dum* clearly implies that the return of Israel to God depends on its recognition of Christ as the saviour; in contrast to the preceding passage Isidore does not indicate how this confession will be brought about. The Pauline verse has a summarizing function also in the fifth passage where it is used in the *quaestiones*.[302] The verse is also partially quoted in a paraphrase when Isidore discusses the blessing over Jacob's youngest son; the point of comparison between Paul's passage and the Old Testament blessing is that Benjamin as the youngest is blessed as the last one.[303]

In addition to the Isidorian passages just analyzed, the Pauline quotation is only adduced in one more Visigothic text, the *sententiae* written by Taio of Zaragoza.[304] Isidore refers the word *Israel* five times explicitly to the Jews; but it has to be admitted that he may subsume both converted Jews and (gentile) Christians under this term. Taking into consideration that numerous church fathers either did not interpret Rom. 11, 25 f. at all or referred the term *Israel* only to the gentile church as the "true Israel", it becomes clear that Isidore's position should not be taken for granted.[305] In the passages analyzed just now he does not follow other patristic authors in limiting the number of Jews who are expected to be saved in the end to a small minority, even though he does express such reservations elsewhere in his writings.[306] His exe-

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[301] *quaest. in Ex.* 9, 2 (PL 83, 291).

[302] *quaest. in I Reg.* 11, 3 (PL 83, 401).

[303] *quaest. in Gen.* 31, 62 (PL 83, 286). Rom. 11, 25 f. is also hinted at in the discussion of the story of the rebellion of Miryam and her subsequent leprosy (Num. 12); cf. *quaest. in Num.* 14, 2 (PL 83, 343).

[304] Taio Caesaraugust. *sent.* V, 25 (PL 80, 978). Taio quotes Rom. 11, 25 f. twice in a relatively short chapter. According to him, all Jews will be saved at the end of times. It should be noted that he assigns an active role to the church in the eschatological conversion of the Jews: *Sancta Ecclesia … in fine mundi Iudaeorum etiam ad se corda convertit.* The double hint at the eschatological conversion may be meant as a warning against endeavours to achieve this in the present.

[305] Cf. Caubet Iturbe, "*Et sic omnis Israel salvus fieret* (Rom. 11, 26). Su interpretación por los escritores cristianos de los siglos III–XII", *Estudios Bíblicos* 21 (1962), 127–150, who does not, however, discuss Isidore of Seville.

[306] *fid. cath.* II, 13, 5 (PL 83, 520): … *illi parti promittuntur quae ex Iudaeis in Deum creditura est; nam neque omnes Iudaei redimendi sunt, neque omnes salvi erunt.* The story of Elijah, at

gesis is mainly in line with the overall tendency of the Pauline text, even though essential passages from the 11ᵗʰ chapter of Romans remain undiscussed.

One of the most cherished ideas of Isidore's, the transition of salvation from the Jews to the gentiles, is also present in the *sententiae*; the passage is almost identical verbatim to a paragraph in *de fide catholica*.[307] Both texts rely on Is. 41, 27f. and Is. 42, 1, the biblical quotations having the same length and being interpreted nearly in the same way. Yet the beginning is different in each case, because in the *sententiae* Isidore adduces Mt. 15, 24: "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel."[308] In *de fide catholica* this passage is missing, being from the New Testament; instead the author adduces words taken from Ps. 125, 3, which he applies to the *universitas gentium* in all the world. Therefore, the initial passages of these two texts each have a particular bias; in *de fide catholica* the explicit reference to Jesus's original self-perception, his mission to the Jews, is lacking. In a very cursory style, Isidore merely claims *cum illis enim ante fuit Deus*, which can easily be referred to Old Testament times, being no unequivocal reference to Christ's original mission. Immediately afterwards the author points to the alleged condemnation of the Jews: *Sed postquam pro peccato suo abiecti sunt, Redemptor mundi in po-*

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whose word fire falls from the sky killing two groups of soldiers, whereas the third stays alive (2 Kings 1) is taken to mean that part of the Jews will be destroyed as well (*quaest. in IV Reg.* 1, 2; PL 83, 419). As elsewhere in his interpretation of biblical passages, Isidore is not entirely consistent. He does not say whether the Jews who are devoured by fire are those who do not convert to Christ in the period before the last judgement, or whether this condemnation extends to part of those still alive at the end of times. For the restriction of the application of *omnis* by several patristic authors see González Salinero, *Las conversiones forzosas de los judíos en el reino visigodo*, Rome 2000, 123.

[307] *sent*. I, 14, 9 (CCL 111, 48 f.); *fid. cath*. II, 7, 3 (PL 83, 513).

[308] This passage from the gospel of Matthew is quoted in other writings of Isidore, too. *Quaest. in Gen*. 29, 11 (PL 83, 269) the important first part of the verse is left out; the rest is referred to the alleged decadence of the Jews at the time of Jesus, which totally overturns the meaning of the passage. *Quaest. in Iud*. 4, 4 (PL 83, 383) the verse is equally presented in this shortened version. *Quaest. in Gen*. 30, 5 (PL 83, 272) the sentence is quoted in its entirety, but without interpretation. What is more, at the beginning Isidore claims that Jesus was sent by the father to the (entire) human race, thus providing a universal perspective from the outset. In the *allegoriae* the parable of the lost sheep (Luke 15, 4–7) is interpreted in such a way that Jesus is said to have found lost human beings only among the *gentes*; the Jews are not mentioned at all (*all*. 173; PL 83, 121). Another Visigothic text quoting Mt. 15, 24 is *c*. 12 of VIII Toledo (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 433 f.), which starts off with very violent language, yet continuing to point out the common calling of Jews and gentiles to salvation.

pulo gentium transiit. This traditional anti-Jewish notion is lacking in the parallel passage of the *sententiae*. One can conclude that the biblical testimony concerning Christ's mission to the Jews is at least mentioned in the *sententiae*, but it is completely lacking in *de fide catholica*; in this treatise the author is only concerned with proving the transition of salvation from the Jews to the gentiles.[309] This tendency is reinforced by his avoidance of prooftexts from the New Testament.

From patristic tradition Isidore takes over the notion of the church as the "true Israel". Yet it is striking that the idea of *verus Israel* is only rarely mentioned explicitly; in *de fide catholica* it just occurs in a single passage, referring to the spiritual exegesis of the exodus from Egypt.[310] A similar interpretation can be found in the *quaestiones*.[311] In view of the extent of Isidore's exegetical production, the notion of the true Israel occurs quite rarely; the theory of the transition of salvation from the Jews to the gentiles plays a much more prominent role. This may be due to the fact that the very difficult and unusual idea of the primary calling of the gentiles can, although with difficulty, be accomodated to the latter theory.[312] In *de fide catholica* an entire chapter is dedicated to proving this claim;[313] in this context the author adduces the above mentioned quotation from Paul's letter to the Romans. The notion of the primacy of the gentiles occurs several times also in the *allegoriae* and in the *quaestiones*; in each instance the interpretation is adapted to the wording of the biblical passage in question.[314] The frequency of such passages in Isidore's works is an indication of the significance he attached to this idea.[315]

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[309] This central idea is mentioned repeatedly in Isidore's exegetical works, mostly based on allegorical and typological exegesis; cf. *all.* 113 (PL 83, 115).

[310] *Omnis enim per fidem verus Israel exit ab Aegypto, dum renuntiat saeculo* (*fid. cath.* II, 24, 10; PL 83, 532).

[311] *quaest. in Num. praef.* 4 (PL 83, 339). See also *quaest. in IV Reg.* 8, 1 (PL 83, 422). However, in one passage of the *quaestiones* Isidore basically includes all humankind in the term *Israel* (*quaest. in Iud.* 7, 2; PL 83, 389).

[312] Even Isidore himself occasionally mentions the opposing view, according to which the gentiles join the Jews (as the originally elected people, mainly patriarchs and prophets) only later (*quaest. in Iud.* 9, 2; PL 83, 391).

[313] *fid. cath.* II, 4; cf. *supra*, p. 146.

[314] See *all.* 50 (PL 83, 108), an interpretation of the story of the birth of Thamar's twins (Gen. 38, 27–30), which is not mentioned in *de fide catholica*, although it could have fostered Isidore's argument in the chapter *fid. cath.* II, 4. See also *all.* 71 (PL 83, 110f.) and *quaest. in Iud.* 2, 4 (PL 83, 381).

[315] Cf. *all.* 160 (PL 83, 119). The parable of the vineyard (Luke 20, 9–16) is also interpreted accordingly (*all.* 183; PL 83, 122). See also the interpretation of the blessing

The accusation linking the Jews to the Antichrist is only rarely put forward in Isidore's works; often the Jews are not even mentioned when he discusses the Antichrist or the end of times.[316] Nor is the blame for having killed Christ put exclusively on the Jews.[317] In the *allegoriae* and the other exegetical works references to the Jews are more frequent than in the rest of his output, but still the Jews are not mentioned in every place where this might have been possible.[318] This is a clear indication that the Jews were not permanently on his mind. Even though in the above analysis at least one passage was pointed out where Isidore intensified an existing anti-Jewish bias,[319] there are numerous other passages where he did not add to the trend found in his sources.

One of the most severe reproaches levelled by Christians against Jews was the charge of deicide. Until the 12th century most Christian theologians held the view that the Jews killed Christ out of ignorance. The charge of deicide presupposes the realization of Jesus's divinity and the intention to kill God in his person.[320] In Latin literature this accusation is only found from the high middle ages onwards.[321] However, there are earlier instances in Greek texts. The first author to explicitly make this accusation is bishop Melito of Sardes, writing in the 2nd century in Asia

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of Abraham by Melchizedek (*quaest. in Gen.* 11, 6; PL 83, 240). Several passages of the book of Genesis are interpreted with a view to proving the superiority, priority and primacy of the gentiles; cf. *quaest. in Gen.* 12, 2; 13, 2; 17, 1f; 23 (PL 83, 240f. 242. 248. 255–258).

[316] Cf. *quaest. in Gen.* 12, 9 (PL 83, 241f.). *Quaest. in Gen.* 14, 13 (PL 83, 244) he mentions *omnes inimici Christi* without naming the Jews explicitly; *quaest. in Num.* 39, 1–3 (PL 83, 355f.) the devil is only associated with heresy and schism.

[317] *Dominus adveniens a credentibus exceptus, ab incredulis est in ligno suspensus* (*quaest. in Gen.* 14, 4; PL 83, 243).

[318] ... *Ecclesiam, perseverantia sua petentem ultionem de inimicis suis, diabolo, vel haereticis* (*all.* 222; PL 83, 127).

[319] See *supra*, p. 176, n. 267.

[320] Cohen, "The Jews as Killers of Christ in the Latin Tradition. From Augustine to the Friars", *Traditio* 39 (1983), 1–27, esp. 4. See also Rohrbacher, "The Charge of Deicide. An Anti-Jewish Motif in Medieval Christian Art", *JMH* 17 (1991), 297–321.

[321] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* III, 47, 5 (ed. Ottaviensis, III, 2732a–2733a); Ramón Llull, *Liber praedicationis contra Iudaeos* 23 (CCCM 38, 44). Remarkably a Jewish convert, Petrus Alfonsi, was among the first to direct this charge against the Jews at the beginning of the 12th century, namely in his anti-Jewish dialogue (*dial.* II; ed. Mieth, Huesca 1996, 68f.); cf. Tolan, "Introducción", *Pedro Alfonso de Huesca: Diálogo contra los judíos*, Huesca 1996, XIXf. For the absence of the charge of deicide in the first millennium see also Blumenkranz, *Juifs et chrétiens dans le monde occidental 430–1096*, Paris/La Haye 1960, 269f.

Minor.[322] Justin Martyr avoided this charge,[323] as did Tertullian, who assumed that the Jews took Christ for an ordinary human being.[324] The accusation is more pronounced in the pseudo-Cyprianic sermon *adversus Iudaeos*.[325] In contrast to Latin authors, Gregory of Nyssa called the Jews killers of the Lord and despisers of God.[326] The charge of deicide is explicit in John Chrysostom.[327]

The first occurrence of this accusation in Latin literature is in a sermon by Peter Chrysologus, who was bishop of Ravenna in the first half of the 5th century. He gives several examples of people and groups who were seduced by envy and consequently thrust into misfortune. Among his examples are Satan, Herod, Cain, and finally the Jews.[328] The preacher is reluctant to use the terrible word, and he admits that deicide did not really occur, but was only a potential result of the Jews' actions. Chronologically, the next Latin text to make a charge of deicide is the *disputatio contra acephalos* by the Roman deacon Rusticus. In a discussion with a heretic the latter repeatedly tries to address the problem of deicide, but Rusticus avoids an answer in the first two cases.[329] Finally reacting to the third question (*Quid autem de Deicidis dicturus es, de Iudaeis?*), the author initially refuses to call the Jews killers of God because of dogmatic reservations. Yet subsequently he adduces exegetical proof why such a charge may be tenable: the Jews are said to have had the intention to kill the heir (Mark 12, 7), which is regarded as tantamount to deicide.[330] It is remarkable that the accusation of deicide is put forward by the heretic; the orthodox author represents himself as being reluctantly drawn towards this position. It should also be noted that the disputation was composed in Constantinople, and that the positions of the heretic are close to "Monophysite" notions. All this

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[322] *Hom. paschalis* 96 and 99 (Hall, 54. 56); see Werner, "Melito of Sardes, the First Poet of Deicide", *HUCA* 37 (1966), 191–210.

[323] Schreckenberg, *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos-Texte und ihr literarisches und historisches Umfeld (1.-11. Jh.)*, Frankfurt/M. and Bern 1982, 197.

[324] *apol.* 21, 3 (CCL 1, 123).

[325] *Interficere ergo potuistis regem et sponsum?* (*adv. Iud.* IV, 2; CCL 4, 269); see also ibid. V, 1 (270): *Talem hostiam optulisti Patri immolando Filium suum?*

[326] *In luciferam sanctam Domini resurrectionem* (*In Christi resurrectionem* V), ed. Gebhardt, Opera IX, 317. The accusation of killing the Lord is also made by Asterius Sophista, who died after 341 (*hom.* III in Ps. 5; ed. Richard, 67, 4ff.).

[327] *adv. Iud.* 1, 7 (PG 48, 854).

[328] *s.* 172, 3 (CCL 24 B, 1051).

[329] *c. Aceph.* (PL 67, 1213). For the first case cf. ibid., 1208.

[330] *Iuste utique Deicidae vocantur, non a fine eventus … sed ab ipso impetus sive instantiae crimine* (ibid., 1214).

confirms the hypothesis that in late antiquity the charge of deicide was mainly levelled against Jews in eastern parts of the empire.

Augustine repeatedly opposed the charge of deicide, calling the Jews not deicides, but homicides. He explains that the Jews would not have crucified Christ if they had known that he was God.[331] Yet elsewhere Augustine refers to the "killing of the Lord"[332] or to the "killing of Christ"[333] allegedly perpetrated by the Jews.

Isidore joins the mainstream of late antique Latin tradition in not levelling the explicit charge of deicide against the Jews. He does not make a difference between Jesus's Jewish contemporaries and later generations of Jews,[334] even though he does establish the principle of personal responsibility (but in another context) in the *prooemia*.[335] According to Isidore, the Jews did not realize Christ's divinity at the time of the crucifixion.[336] He repeatedly claims that the Jews killed Christ, but he never uses the term deicide,[337] although at times his accusations are quite severe.[338] In one passage of the *quaestiones* he implicitly charges the Jews with deicide, without however using the actual word.[339] According to Albert, Isidore accuses the Jews of deicide four times in *de fide catholica*; however, in each case he blames the Jews for allegedly killing Christ, but not God.[340] Of course he establishes Christ's divinity in the

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[331] *enarr. in Ps.* 37, 11 (CCL 38, 178; following 1 Cor. 2, 8). See also *enarr. in Ps.* 65, 5 (CCL 39, 843). Also the pseudo-Augustinian *altercatio Ecclesiae et Synagogae* (CCL 69 A, 46) merely mentions the *homicidium* of the Jews.

[332] *Erat quidem illa synagoga interfectrix Domini* (*enarr. in Ps.* 72, 4; CCL 39, 988).

[333] *in Joh.* 17, 16 (CCL 36, 178); *s.* 10, 2 (CCL 41, 154). For the charge of having killed Christ see also Asterius of Amasea, *hom.* X, 7, 2 (Datema, 139).

[334] *fid. cath.* I, 36, 3 (PL 83, 485).

[335] *pro.* 57 (PL 83, 169).

[336] *Sed quia eum Iudaei non agnoscentes, congregati sunt ad interficiendum eum* (*fid. cath.* I, 19, 1; PL 83, 477).

[337] … *illi autem putantes hoc tantum esse quod videbatur, occiderunt hominem* (*fid. cath.* I, 15, 9; PL 83, 474). The idea that the Jewish contemporaries of Jesus misunderstood his identity is also present *quaest. in Gen.* 2, 7 (PL 83, 214). Ildefonse of Toledo also blames the Jews for having killed Christ, but not God (*cogn. bapt.* 8; Campos Ruiz, 245).

[338] *Populus impius Iudaeorum* … *consensit in necem Domini Salvatoris* (*quaest. in Gen.* 8, 6; PL 83, 235 f.). The reproach of having killed the Lord is hinted at in the following passage: … *ad fabricam dominici corporis, propter quam templi mentio facta est, in cuius figuram templum a Iudaeis destructum triduo citaturum se esse dicebat* (*lib. num.* 24, 100; PL 83, 198). The interpretation of the parable of the vineyard is even more explivit (*all.* 183; PL 83, 122): … *Iudaeorum* (sc. *populus*) … *damnatur, quia* … *in ipsum Dominum vineae parricidales manus exercuit.* See also *quaest. in Gen.* 23, 14 (PL 83, 257).

[339] *quaest. in Gen.* 31, 9 (PL 83, 278).

[340] See also *quaest. in Gen.* 6, 11 (PL 83, 225: *crucifigendo Christum*); ibid., 6, 16 (PL 83, 226): … *propter reatum occisi Christi*; *all.* 187 (PL 83, 122) and *eccl. off.* I, 12, 9 (CCL 113,

initial chapters of his treatise, but still there is more than a rhetorical difference between the brutal charge of deicide and that of killing Christ. In spite of his occasional verbal extremism, this is also true for the *quaestiones*.[341] In this connection it is telling that in the canons of the 2nd council of Seville the Jews are said "only" to have crucified a human being.[342]

In two passages of his entire œuvre Isidore quotes 1 Cor. 2, 8: "None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."[343] In accordance with patristic tradition he refers this sentence to the Jews in both cases, even though Paul talks about the *principes huius saeculi*.[344] In the *quaestiones* the sentence is used to justify the claim that, according to the economy of salvation, not the Jews but the gentiles were to recognize Christ.[345] In *de fide catholica* the context is similar: in the chapter discussing the corporal visibility of Christ on earth it is employed to prove that Christ was to be seen, but not to be recognized by the Jews, while the gentiles did both. In both cases where Isidore quotes Paul's passage from Corinthians he does not insinuate that the Jews are allegedly guilty, it rather serves to illustrate his most cherished idea: according to God's plan of salvation history, Christ was not to be recognized by the Jews in order to facilitate the transition of salvation away from them to the gentiles; this thesis is explicitly put forward elsewhere.[346] Accordingly, the crucifixion was essential precisely for the benefit of the gentiles.

In contrast to this positive assessment, the allegation that the Jews crucified Christ appears with an ambivalent or even decisively negative undertone in other contexts. In one passage of the *quaestiones* Isidore claims that the Jews tried to kill Christ against God's will.[347] However, since this is subsequently said to have been the cause of the salvation

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13). Several more passages could be adduced where Isidore talks of the alleged killing of Christ or of the Lord, especially in the *quaestiones*.

[341] *quaest. in Gen.* 30, 6 (PL 83, 272).

[342] *Quem alium nisi indubitanter hominem quem Iudaei crucifixerunt?* (II Seville, *c.* 13; Vives, *Concilios visigóticos e hispano-romanos*, Barcelona/Madrid 1963, 176).

[343] *Si enim cognovissent, numquam Dominum gloriae crucifixissent*: *fid. cath.* I, 17, 1 (PL 83, 476); *quaest. in I Reg.* 17, 2 (PL 83, 405).

[344] In the *placitum* the Jews of Toledo were required to sign in 637/38, Paul's charge is taken up: *Dominum gloriae crucifixerunt* (PL Suppl. 4, 1665).

[345] *quaest. in I Reg.* 17, 3 (PL 83, 405).

[346] *Nisi Christum Iudaei crucifixissent, perierat mundus* (*quaest. in Gen.* 30, 22; PL 83, 274). A similar thought is found in Aug. *s.* 122, 4 (PL 38, 683).

[347] *quaest. in I Reg.* 11, 2 (PL 83, 400).

of the gentiles, there is a logical contradiction, unless one assumes
that the gentiles were not part of the economy of salvation. Moreover,
Isidore seems to imply that the Jews knew very well whom they were
crucifying because otherwise they could not have hoped to extinguish
the salvation of the gentiles. This last notion seems to have been central
for him, since it is repeated in several contexts;[348] what is more, it has
a direct bearing on his central idea, the calling and mission of the
gentiles. With regard to the present, Christian preaching among the
nations is said to be the precondition for the salvation of the Jews.[349]
Apparently, the Jews caused the salvation of both themselves and of the
gentiles, although against their own volition.

In two places of the treatise *de fide catholica* Isidore directly accuses
the Jews of having killed Christ, without further elucidating the impli-
cations for the economy of salvation. Instead he puts the crucifixion
into the context of the cases when Jews allegedly killed prophets in Old
Testament times.[350] Taken together, Isidore's interpretation of the cru-
cifixion is contradictory; in the *quaestiones* the positive evaluation from
the perspective of salvation history seems to prevail. In *de fide catholica*
the accusation of having killed Christ is only mitigated in a single
instance, with the help of the quotation from Paul's first letter to the
Corinthians discussed above. This biblical passage implies—although
very indirectly—that the Jews' ignorance was the precondition of the
transition of salvation from Jews to gentiles. This latter notion is much
more prominent in the *quaestiones*.

When discussing the canon of the Old Testament in his treatise
de ecclesiasticis officiis, Isidore refers to the statement of an unknown
church father (*quidam sapientium*), according to which the Jews are said
to have excluded the book of the Wisdom of Solomon from their
scriptures because of the clear testimony contained therein concerning
the alleged guilt of their fathers in the killing of Christ.[351] This charge
implies two levels. According to this interpretation, the Jews are said
to have recognized Jesus as "the just", but they would have decided
to check his claim to be God's son by maltreating him in order to
see God's reaction. This does not imply that the Jews really knew

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[348] *quaest. in Iud.* 4, 5 (PL 83, 383). See also the typological interpretation of the
prophet Jonah *pro.* 68 f. (PL 83, 171).
[349] *quaest. in I Reg.* 11, 2 f. (PL 83, 400 f.).
[350] *fid. cath.* II, 9, 3 (PL 83, 515). See also *fid. cath.* I, 22, 1 (PL 83, 479).
[351] *eccl. off.* I, 12, 9 (CCL 113, 13).

that he was the Messiah and God's son; one can rather conclude that they were ignorant of his real rank and nature, because otherwise there would have been no need to doubt and check Jesus's claim. The second level refers to the Jews living after New Testament times. Their alleged action concerning the biblical canon implies that they did recognize Christ's nature because otherwise they would not have needed to conceal the alleged sacrilege of their forefathers. All in all, the tendency of the first level just mentioned corresponds to Paul's statement in 1 Cor. 2, 8: Jesus's Jewish contemporaries did not recognize him as the Christ because otherwise they would presumably have acted differently.

In contrast to *de fide catholica*, the ethical and moral interpretation of scripture receives prime attention in the *quaestiones*; the author focusses on repentance and (moral) conversion. Although it is still there, anti-Jewish exegesis recedes to the background, being relegated to select passages. In the *quaestiones* Isidore is concerned first of all about the morals inside the church and about the condition of the *militia Christi*. Even though he does not mention forced conversions explicitly, it is possible to conclude that they would only add to the existing problems inside the church. When he talks of exerting pressure on people, Isidore always thinks of members of the church and of their sins and vices, but not of non-Christians.

Isidore uses a number of patristic models and notions applied to the Jews, such as the alleged *mutatio* of the commandments and of the covenant,[352] the presentation of the gospel as a new law,[353] and the notion of the church as the *verus Israel*; this latter concepts is, however, quite rare in his work.[354] It is remarkable that in all his

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[352] *quaest. in I Reg.* 1, 5; 16, 3 (PL 83, 392. 404); *quaest. in Lev.* 17, 8. 11 (PL 83, 337 f.). The gospel is complemented only by the ten commandments, the sole "remnant" of the Old Testament (*quaest. in Dtn.* 22, 1; PL 83, 370); for a parallelization of gospel and commandments see also *quaest. in Jos.* 17, 1 (PL 83, 379). Only before the incarnation was it possible to be justified by "the law", which was indeed achieved by a number of Jews (*quaest. in Jos.* 4, 2; PL 83, 372). Yet in places where this anti-Jewish dogmatic concept does not take priority, Isidore also accepts other commandments from the Old Testament (*dif.* II, 37, 145 f.; PL 83, 93).

[353] *eccl. off.* I, 11, 1 (CCL 113, 9). See also *quaest. in Gen.* 30, 14 (PL 83, 273); *quaest. in Lev.* 12, 8 (PL 83, 331); *quaest. in Dtn.* 1, 1 (PL 83, 359). The new law is of an entirely spiritual nature (*quaest. in Jos.* 6, 1; PL 83, 373).

[354] For an identification of Israel with those who believe in Christ cf. *quaest. in Gen.* 31, 55 (PL 83, 285). The notion of the church as *verus Israel* is the cornerstone of the argument in Augustine's *ep.* 196; for Jerome see González Salinero, *Biblia y polémica antijudía en Jerónimo*, Madrid 2003, 157–164. One of the important prooftexts traditionally

theological works he accepts the biblical expectation that the Jews will only convert at the end of times.[355] Like numerous other authors, he blames the Jews for allegedly sticking to the letter of the biblical text, thus being internally and spiritually barren.[356] Isidore follows patristic tradition in conceptualizing the conflict between Christians and Jews as a hermeneutical argument about the proper understanding of the Bible; he only expects a resolution of this conflict as an outcome of the eschatological conversion of the Jews.[357] Consequently, all attempts to convert the Jews, let alone all Jews, before that time are doomed to failure from the outset. Within the economy of salvation the Jews are not condemned; they are still called to faith, which is, of course, Christian faith. They continue to be the addressees of the relevant biblical promises.[358] While not all baptized Christians can be sure of their salvation, it is sure that at least some Jews will be saved.[359]

In contrast to other works, Isidore does not discuss the conditions of contemporary Christian existence in *de fide catholica*; conversions of Christians and their repentance receive no attention.[360] If sin is mentioned in this treatise, it is always Jewish sin. This polarized view of human existence is an inheritance from patristic anti-Judaism. However, Isidore refrains from excessive abuse, which can in turn be found in liturgical sources contained in the Mozarabic *Liber ordinum*.[361] Following patristic tradition, Isidore presents the Jews as stubborn, but not as dangerous; the alleged danger posed by Jews to their Christian neighbours is not discussed in contemporary anti-Jewish literature, even

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adduced for the theology of replacement (Gen. 15, 4–6) is only mentioned in passing in Isidore's *de fide catholica* (*fid. cath.* II, 22, 1; PL 83, 529f.), and the context is not the alleged replacement of Israel by the church, but the claim that faith in Christ is the only way to a correct interpretation of scripture.

[355] *all.* 213 (PL 83, 125).

[356] *quaest. in Ex.* 23, 4 (PL 83, 298).

[357] *quaest. in Gen.* 31, 64 (PL 83, 286).

[358] *Nec legis plebs ab Evangelii possessione excluditur* (*quaest. in Num.* 42, 11; PL 83, 358).

[359] *quaest. in Num.* 42, 10 (ibid.).

[360] According to Peter Brown the realization that human life is sinful was the main topic of theological reflection in the west after the 7th century, which entailed the search for ways to achieve a remission of sins; cf. id., "Vers la naissance du purgatoire. Amnistie et pénitence dans le christianisme occidental de l'Antiquité tardive au Haut Moyen Âge", *Annales* 52 (1997), 1260f. In this connection Brown coins the term "peccatisation du monde" (ibid., 1260). Isidore discusses these problems in his *synonyma sive lamentationes animae peccatricis* and in parts of the *sententiae*.

[361] See the *oratio super convertente Iudeo*: … *tetrum fetorem horreat Sinagoge, quem ydolorum spurcitiis inquinata lupanari prostitutione collegit* (Férotin, *Liber Ordinum*, 107, 3ff.).

though is was adduced in conciliar legislation towards the end of the 7th century in order to justify anti-Jewish measures.[362] Unlike similar claims made in the high middle ages, according to which the Jews were dangerous for life and health of individual Christians, such late Visigothic sources allege that Jews put the political "well-being" of Christian society in jeopardy.[363]

In conclusion, it becomes evident that extent and character of Isidore's statements concerning Jews and Judaism vary significantly in his works; this is probably quite often due to the tendency of his sources. However, there is no doubt that it was not his intention to add anti-Jewish statements at every conceivable moment. His assessment of Judaism on the whole is in accordance with tradition; this is true for his view concerning the relationship between Jews and gentiles, for his expectation of the eschatological conversion of the Jews and for the accusation of the murder of Christ allegedly perpetrated by the Jews, which as a rule is not replaced by the more severe charge of deicide. His interest is not directed at possible exegetical or dogmatic innovations, but at repeating and propagating ancient church doctrine.

3.7. *Isidore's position compared to other patristic authors*

In several places of his work Augustine points to the close relation between Christ and the synagogue, especially when interpreting Eph. 5, 31 ("For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh"); he takes the father as a reference to the first person of the Trinity and the mother as a figure of the synagogue.[364] Isidore follows Augustine's wording very closely when he interprets this passage, calling the synagogue Christ's mother and the church his wife.[365] Christ's relationship with

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[362] XVII Toledo, *c.* 8 (Vives, *Concilios visigóticos e hispano-romanos*, Barcelona/Madrid 1963, 535).

[363] For an intensification of charges that Jews constitute an acute danger for Christians after the 12th century see Chazan, *Medieval Stereotypes and Modern Antisemitism*, Berkeley *et al.* 1997, 133.

[364] *s.* 91, 7 (PL 38, 570): *Reliquit et matrem Synagogam, de qua carnaliter natus est.* See also *Gen. c. Man.* II, 24, 37 (CSEL 91, 161); cf. Lamirande, "*Reliquit et matrem synagogam. La Synagogue et l'Église selon Saint Augustin*", *Augustiniana* 41 (1991), esp. 683f.

[365] *quaest. in Gen.* 3, 11 (PL 83, 218); cf. Aug. *c. Faust.* 12, 8 (CSEL 25/1, 337). The continuation of Isidore's argument is nearly a copy of Augustine's text, from where he

his "earthly" mother, the synagogue, receives a negative connotation in both authors through an association with the "carnal" sense of scripture.

Augustine warned Christians against arrogance towards the Jews, declaring that God had the power to reinstate them and lead them to salvation.[366] Isidore fails to issue such a warning. It is remarkable that he implicitly accepts the Augustinian theory of Jewish witness on the one hand, adducing "Jewish" prooftexts from the Bible meant to corroborate Christian truth, but that on the other hand he fails to explicitly base his argument on that theory. The Augustinian notion that the Jews serve as librarians and desks by providing Christians with the books of the Old Testament, thereby unwillingly proving the truth of Christian teaching, is only rarely mentioned in Isidore's œuvre.[367] This may be due to the fact that Augustine had devised his theory mainly for an intellectual argument against pagan opponents, namely neoplatonic philosophers, who were no longer serious competitors in Isidore's time.[368]

Another reason for Isidore's reluctance to use Augustine's theory may be his fear that Christians might feel encouraged to enter into theological discussions with Jews, which could result in their defeat.[369] The "arguments" provided in *de fide catholica* are therefore more a defensive exposition and deduction of church doctrine, an affirmation of

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also takes the preceding quote from Phil. 2, 6. Isidore repeats the interpretation of the synagogue as Christ's mother *quaest. in Gen.* 16, 5 (PL 83, 247) and *all.* 211 (PL 83, 125).

[366] *enarr. in Ps.* 65, 5 (CCL 39, 843): *Potens est enim Deus iterum inserere illos* (Rom. 11, 23b); cf. also *adv. Iud.* I (PL 42, 51). Augustine follows the structure of Paul's text: God remains subject and agent of salvation history, there is no room for human initiative in this sphere.

[367] *Quid est enim hodie aliud gens ipsa, nisi quaedam scrinaria Christianorum, baiulans legem et prophetas ad testimonium assertionis Ecclesiae, ut nos honoremus per sacramentum, quod nuntiat illa per litteram?* (*quaest. in Gen.* 8, 7; PL 83, 236). See also *quaest. in I Reg.* 14, 6 (PL 83, 402). The statement referring to Jews of Old Testament times in *quaest. in Gen.* 2, 5 (PL 83, 213) has a different focus: During the third world age it was the alleged purpose of Jewish existence to produce the fruits of holy scripture; by contrast, the Augustinian theory refers to the present.

[368] For a detailed analysis of the different stages during which Augustine's theory developed see Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law*, Berkeley *et al.* 1999, 19–65.

[369] Following Paul's *oportet et haereses esse* (1 Cor. 11, 19), patristic authors had often stressed the potential use of heresies for sharpening Catholic argument against them. Isidore accepts this notion in a generalized form (*quaest. in Jos.* 18, 3; PL 83, 380), referring mainly to a struggle against internal vices. His failure to include a hint to the potential benefit of intellectual argument may have resulted from a feeling that the argumentative power of his Christian contemporaries was rather limited.

Christian identity. Since the conversion of the Jews was only expected at the end of times there was no need to convince them in the meantime. For Christian readers it seemed sufficient to reaffirm traditional christo-logical and ecclesiological teaching and to claim its conclusiveness and inevitability, without advising its practical "application" in discussions with Jews. Isidore's failure to give the Augustinian notion of Jewish witness greater prominence in his writings led to the situation that a very important element of patristic tradition, which could have been used to justify Jewish existence in Christian society, received little attention precisely in a period when that existence came under severe attack for the first time in European history.

Isidore also takes up a second notion put forward by Augustine, the justification of Jewish existence with an interpretation of Gen. 4, 15, the mark imposed on Cain, who is taken to be a type of the Jews.[370] The Jews are said to have been visibly punished for their alleged guilt in the death of Christ; this public punishment is taken to be a sign for the Christians. A similar argument for the preservation of the Jews is deduced from Ps. 58, 12, another traditional patristic prooftext, which is applied by Isidore to a story about Saul and David.[371] The right of the Jews to exist in Christian society could also have been deduced from an exegesis of the Judas kiss, which is, however, not explicitly interpreted by Isidore along that line.[372] The interpretation of the scene in Gethsemane, where Peter cuts off the high priest's servant's ear, could almost appear as an anticipation of the high medieval theory of the Jews as servants of the imperial chamber,[373] which is, however, an improbable hypothesis, given conflicting interpretations of similar biblical passages, where Jews are not mentioned at all.[374]

Unlike Gregory the Great, who repeatedly intervened in legal conflicts, thereby ensuring the preservation of Jewish rights, at times even

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[370] *quaest. in Gen.* 6, 16 (PL 83, 226). Cf. Mellinkoff, *The Mark of Cain*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1981.

[371] *Ne occideris eos* (Ps. 58, 12b). … *ostenderet prophetia Christum Iudaeos non occidisse, sed eis tantum regni gloriam abstulisse* (*quaest. in I Reg.* 17, 6; PL 83, 405).

[372] *quaest. in II Reg.* 3, 4 (PL 83, 413).

[373] *all.* 242 (PL 83, 128).

[374] *quaest. in Jos.* 18, 1 (PL 83, 379). For an interpretation of Ps. 58, 12 see also Aug. *enarr. in Ps.* 58, 1, 22 (CCL 39, 744) and *adv. Iud.* VII (PL 42, 57). Still in the high middle ages this verse was interpreted by Bernard of Clairvaux and Alexander of Hales as a prohibition to kill Jews; cf. Schreiner, "*Tolerantia*. Begriffs- und wirkungsgeschichtliche Studien zur Toleranzauffassung des Kirchenvaters Augustinus", *Toleranz im Mittelalter*, Sigmaringen 1998, 371 f.

reinterpreting traditional legal norms in favour of the Jews in order to prevent a deterioration of their status,[375] no such activities of Isidore have been recorded. This may be explained by the character of his office, which did not give him the opportunity to influence legal decisions by letters or decrees. In addition, the sweeping political changes that occurred after 589 probably entailed a weakening of traditional Roman law, which is indicated by increasing tendencies to achieve a unified code of laws for the entire population, which was finally accomplished in 654.[376] Isidore's lack of interest in the status accorded to the Jews in Roman law[377] corresponds to a similar attitude adopted by Gregory of Tours, who likewise lived in a "Barbarian" kingdom, whereas Gregory the Great had spent some years at the court in Constantinople, Rome being part of the Byzantine empire anyway. Therefore he was in a far better position to understand the workings of Roman law.

Unlike Isidore, Gregory of Tours did not write exegetical works focussing on theological argument against the Jews. In his historiographic account there are occasional references to discussions held with Jews and even to baptisms of Jews, which are, however, mostly presented as results of miracles, God alone appearing as agent of conversion. With regard to the forced baptism of individual Jews decreed by Chilperic I,[378] Gregory points to the theological futility of such measures.[379] He neither denigrates Jewish faith, nor does he allude to their alleged guilt in the death of Christ. His anti-Arian statements are

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[375] … *sicut Romanis vivere legibus permittuntur* (*ep.* II, 45; CCL 140, 137). Baltrusch ("Gregor der Große und sein Verhältnis zum Römischen Recht am Beispiel seiner Politik gegenüber den Juden", *HZ* 259, 1994, 47–50) showed that Gregory declined to follow some restrictive injunctions of Justinian's Code on purpose in order to improve their legal status, which was meant to further missionary endeavours. For the contradictory attitude of Gregory towards the Code see also Bammel, "Gregor der Große und die Juden", *Gregorio Magno e il suo tempo*, Rome 1991, I, 285f.; Boesch Gajano, "Per una storia degli Ebrei in Occidente tra Antichità e Medioevo. La testimonianza di Gregorio Magno", *Quaderni Medievali* 8 (1979), 12–43.

[376] However, the canons adopted by II Seville in 619 still show an influence of Roman law; therefore Isidore may have been acquainted with some of its basic principles. For the reception of late antique civil law by that council see Orlandis, *Die Synoden auf der Iberischen Halbinsel bis zum Einbruch des Islam*, Paderborn *et al.* 1981, 139ff.

[377] He did not accord an identity-generating or distinctive quality to law anyway, as indicated by his description of different peoples in the *Etymologies*; cf. *etym.* IX, 2, 97 (Reydellet, 97).

[378] Chilperic brought pressure to bear on the Jew Priscus: … *ut, quem credere voluntariae non poterat, audire et credere faceret vel invitum* (*hist.* VI, 17; MGH, SRM, I, 1, 286).

[379] *hist.* VI, 17 (MGH, SRM, I, 1, 286).

sharper and much more severe.[380] In Isidore this emphasis is reversed: being mainly interested in integrating Goths and Hispano-Romans into a new community of Catholic Goths, anti-Arian attacks could have been perceived as a denigration of the Gothic past; they were therefore unwelcome in his endeavours to forge a new nation. While Gregory of Tours conceives the ideal of a Catholic *civitas* headed by its bishop,[381] Isidore sketches the model of a Catholic *regnum* headed by an orthodox king. In Gregory's mental map there are two groups of outsiders, Arians and Jews,[382] whereas Isidore retains only the second one, using it as a backdrop for his project of a Catholic Gothic identity superseding the Arian one of the past.

To conclude this chapter Isidore's positions will be compared to attitudes expressed by other Visigothic authors of the 7th century. In his treatise *de perpetua virginitate sanctae Mariae* Ildefonse of Toledo addresses three adversaries; after refuting two heretics of the 4th century, Helvidius and Jovinian, by far the largest section of the work is devoted to a discussion with an anonymous Jew.[383] Both method and argument leave no doubt that the author has Christian readers in mind, whose faith he intends to confirm. It is interesting to observe that unlike Isidore he does address heresy in his anti-Jewish work, but significantly he chooses heresies of the distant Roman past that have nothing to do with the Goths. His choice of a mariological topic made it impossible anyway to discuss the Arian past of the Goths in this connection. Unlike Isidore, Ildefonse shows his clear intention to defeat and destroy his enemy, pelt-

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[380] Keely, "Arians and Jews in the *Histories* of Gregory of Tours", *JMH* 23 (1997), 105.

[381] Heinzelmann, "Heresy in Books I and II of Gregory of Tours' *Historiae*", *After Rome's Fall. Narrators and Sources of Early Medieval History*, Toronto *et al.* 1998, 72: "… the relation of the people (*populus*) of a city to its bishop is exactly on the same level as that of a *gens* to its king."

[382] See also Goffart, "Foreigners in the *Histories* of Gregory of Tours", *Rome's Fall and After*, London 1989, 275–291.

[383] Blanco García, "El tratado *De virginitate perpetua Sanctae Mariae* de San Ildefonso", *Zaragoza* 20 (1964), 239–242; Canal, "Fuentes del *De virginitate sanctae Mariae* de S. Ildefonso de Toledo", *Claretianum* 6 (1966), 115–130; Cascante Dávila, "El Tratado *De Virginitate* de S. Ildefonso de Toledo", *Patrología Toledano-Visigoda*, Madrid 1970, 349–368; Gil Fernández, "El tratado *De virginitate Beatae Mariae* de S. Ildefonso de Toledo", *Habis* 6 (1975), 153–166; Muñoz León, "El uso de la Biblia en el tratado *De virginitate perpetua Sanctae Mariae* de San Ildefonso de Toledo", *Doctrina y piedad mariana en torno al III Concilio de Toledo*, Salamanca 1990, 251–285 and Carlos del Valle, "El 'Tratado de la virginidad perpetua de Santa María' de San Ildefonso de Toledo", *La controversia judeocristiana en España*, Madrid 1998, 115–118. For the attitude of Taio of Zaragoza towards the Jews see Carlos del Valle, "Tajón de Zaragoza", ibid. 111–114 and González Salinero, *Las conversiones forzosas de los judíos en el reino visigodo*, Rome 2000, 113.

ing him with a barrage of arguments whose cumulation is due to the
"baroque" style adopted by the author. This form clearly demonstrates
that he has no intention whatsoever to convince an intellectual oppo-
nent by the quality of his argument, he rather wants to "refute" him by
the impact of his own self-confidence and by the quantity of his rhetor-
ical exclamations.[384] The call upon the Jews to convert is a rhetorical
means rather than the culmination of an intellectual argument. Unlike
Isidore, Ildefonse does not want to present the whole Catholic faith, at
least insofar as it might be contested by Jews; he limits his exposition
to a special theological field, using traditional methods employed in the
literature *adversus Iudaeos*.

Ildefonse does not seem to have had any significant influence on poli-
tics, not even as regards the more and more acute problem of "relaps-
ing" Jews. By contrast, Julian of Toledo did not only conduct a literary
argument against the Jews; he also took an active part in devising the
anti-Jewish legislation of King Ervig. This double approach is an indi-
cation that by the second half of the century members of the Visigothic
elite had come to realize that the problem of "Judaizing" Christians
and "relapsing" Jews could not be solved by merely trusting in the pro-
cess of a gradual christianization of society at large.[385] Julian's treatise
de comprobatione sextae aetatis does not contain another summary of tradi-
tional anti-Jewish argument; he follows Ildefonse in addressing a special
theological question, in this case the refutation of eschatological expec-
tations current among contemporary Jews.[386] The fact that Julian felt

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[384] Olster detects a similar tendency in contemporary Byzantine literature *adver-
sus Iudaeos*, which belongs, however, to different genres and which came into being
in a totally different political situation: "The dialogues' insulting tone toward Jews
and Judaism, and the patent artificiality of Jewish characters and arguments, suggest
strongly that the authors had little interest in converting Jews. On the contrary, the
response to defeat that dominates all seventh-century literature so dominates these dia-
logues that one must doubt whether they were intended to address Jews and their
objections at all." (Olster, *Roman Defeat, Christian Response, and the Literary Construction of the
Jew*, Philadelphia 1994, 13).

[385] Linehan, *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain*, Oxford 1993, 44: "Isidore's
project for the 'continuous conversion' of the *regnum* and unification through education
was compromised from the outset."

[386] Campos, "El *De comprobatione sextae aetatis libri tres* de San Julián de Toledo",
Helmántica 18 (1967), 297–340; id., "El *De comprobatione sextae aetatis libri tres* de San
Julián de Toledo. Sus fuentes, dependencias y originalidad", *Patrología Toledano-Visigoda*,
Madrid 1970, 245–259; Carlos del Valle, "El *De comprobatione sextae aetatis* de Julián de
Toledo y el judaísmo español", *Estudios Bíblicos* 49 (1991), 251–263 and id., "San Julián
de Toledo", *La controversia judeocristiana en España*, Madrid 1998, 119–130. For the ongoing
argument about the six ages of the world—mainly with regard to the high and later

an urgent necessity to convince Visigothic Christians that the messianic period—the 6th age of the world—had already started with the incarnation of Christ is a clear indication that Visigothic clergy had still not succeeded in strengthening the Catholic faith of their flock to such an extent that they would have been impervious to Jewish arguments according to which the 6th age would only begin at some point of time in the future. This should not be confused with something called "Jewish mission" or "proselytism" because the messianic expectations Julian fought against should rather be taken as evidence that Jewish communities desperately tried to assert their faith and identity in a struggle to survive. Such a struggle may have appeared attractive and honourable in the eyes of some Christians, which was likely to shake the official ideology of the Catholic *gens Gothorum*, a fear shared by Julian himself: … *etiam quosdam e fidelium numero titubare compellunt.*[387]

At the beginning of the 7th century Isidore had followed the line of patristic literature *adversus Iudaeos* by indirectly assigning the Jews a subservient role on the verge of, but still inside Christian society. However, he limited his statements to quite a few hints, refraining from a more detailed and substantial exposition similar to Augustine's discussion of that point. There is no evidence that he tried to encourage kings to enact anti-Jewish laws; it should be remembered that the 4th council of Toledo was convened by the usurper Sisenand, who wanted to have his accession legalized by the ecclesiastical authorities. The fathers of the council, headed by Isidore, reacted to the royal demand, but they were doubtless in a position to take an active part in the formulation of the decisions. The canons devoted to Jews mainly deal with the confused situation brought about by Sisebut's policies. At the end of the century the situation was different. Ervig's accession to the throne had greatly benefitted from Julian's active collaboration, which gave the bishop enough power to be able to influence anti-Jewish legislation at the 12th council of Toledo in 681. In Julian's view Jews were no longer part of society; for that reason he advocated measures aimed at their absorption by the Christian majority. In order to convince Visigothic Christians that Jewish arguments were untenable, he summarized traditional patristic doctrine, which was followed by an attempt to prove that the eschatological expectations of the Jews lacked scriptural foundation.

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middle ages—cf. Roth, "'Seis edades durará el mundo'. Temas de la polémica judía española", *CD* 199 (1986), 45–65.

[387] *sext. aet.* I, 1 (CCL 115, 149).

Unlike Isidore, Ildefonse and Julian chose special theological sub-
jects. At least the latter was motivated by issues that had come up in
current Jewish-Christian polemics; whether this was also true for the
former is an open question. The title Isidore chose for his anti-Jewish
treatise indicates that he did not intend to address one special topic
only, and unlike Julian he did not explicitly tackle a current problem.
It should be remembered that none of Isidore's works was devoted to
a discussion of specific problems of the day, not even those written at
the request of the king, although his œuvre does reflect contemporary
concerns. His interest is always a more general one: he wants to put
the whole range of ancient "secular" and patristic tradition to the use
of Christian society. The outline of his treatise *de fide catholica* also cor-
responds to that desire, the "profane" heritage being of less importance
in this case, of course. A link to the current social and political situa-
tion is not established by a call to convert Jews or by an argument that
the Jews should be excluded from the commonwealth; such a link is
rather provided by the propagation of the notion of the *vocatio omnium
gentium*, which is a reference to the conversion of the Goths in 589. The
Goths are extolled, whereas the Jews are devalued; passively the latter
point to the glorious mission of the Goths. Isidore's treatise against the
Jews reflects and justifies the social situation that had emerged at the
end of the 6th century: Goths and Christian Hispano-Romans, belong-
ing to the *gentes*, are called to Catholic faith; this common faith provides
the basis for their merging into a new Catholic nation, which is pro-
moted as the bearer of the *regnum Gothorum*.[388] Isidore remains faithful
to patristic tradition in not denying the right of the Jews to exist—as
Jews—within Catholic and Gothic society.[389] Precisely this point marks
the difference to the situation prevalent at the end of the 7th century.

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[388] For the *gens* as bearer of the kingdom see Messmer, *Hispania-Idee und Gotenmythos*,
Zurich 1960, 118.

[389] An analysis of Isidore's position disproves the deterministic concept of Geisel,
according to whom anti-Jewish repression was allegedly inevitable for political reasons;
cf. Geisel, *Die Juden im Frankenreich*, Frankfurt/M. *et al.* 1998, 202.

ISIDORE'S POSITION ON
CONTEMPORARY JEWISH POLICIES

4.1. *Forced baptism and its consequences*

Isidore's attitude to Sisebut's policies regarding the Jews has received much attention in scholarship. Even in recent publications oversimplified assessments of his "influence" can still be found.[1] One of the problems conntected with this issue is the static view of Isidore's positions, which basically denies a development of his attitude.[2] This is true both for critical assessments[3] and for more positive ones.[4] In order to detect a possible change in Isidore's attitudes it is essential to establish a chronology of his works, which can only be tentative.[5]

The earliest reference to forced baptism occurs in the *Chronicle*, whose first version may have been composed around 615, in the earlier part of

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[1] Roth, *Jews, Visigoths and Muslims in Medieval Spain*, Leiden *et al.* 1994, 13: "Given the strong animosity of Isidore to the Jews, it most certainly was his influence which strengthened the king's own anti-Jewish feeling and led to the notorious decree." See also Battenberg, *Das europäische Zeitalter der Juden. Zur Entwicklung einer Minderheit in der nichtjüdischen Umwelt Europas*, Darmstadt 1990, I, 29.

[2] On the alternative of Isidore's occasional insincerity versus the assumption of an evolution of his attitude see González Salinero, *Las conversiones forzosas de los judíos en el reino visigodo*, Rome 2000, 126–129, who basically denies any fundamental change in Isidore's position on forced baptisms. For a change in Isidore's attitude see Cazier, "Les Sentences d'Isidore de Séville et le IVᵉ Concile de Tolède", *Los Visigodos. Historia y Civilización*, Murcia 1986, 386 note 10.

[3] Albert, "*De Fide Catholica Contra Judaeos* d'Isidore de Séville", *REJ* 141 (1982), 304f.: "... l'attitude somme toute favorable d'Isidore à l'égard de la conversion forcée des juifs du royaume wisigothique par le roi Sisebut".

[4] Díaz y Díaz, "Introducción general", *San Isidoro de Sevilla: Etimologías*, Madrid 1982, 139: "Isidoro toma una postura diferente al oponerse a las medidas de fuerza, confiando en el valor y recursos de la apologética." See also Saitta ("I giudei nella Spagna visigota. Da Suintila a Rodrigo", *Quaderni Catanesi* 5, 1983, 116: "Il battesimo forzato, già condannato da Isidoro per l'epoca di Sisebuto"), Monzó ("El bautismo de los judíos en la España visigoda. En torno al canon 57 del concilio IV de Toledo", *Trabajos de Derecho Canónico II*, Rome 1953, 124) and Bachrach (*Early Medieval Jewish Policy in Western Europe*, Minneapolis 1977, 9).

[5] For questions of dating see *supra*, p. 38.

Sisebut's reign;[6] it is unclear whether the *Chronicle* was finished before *de fide catholica*.[7] In the original version the forced baptism of the Jews is the last reported event. Shortly before, the author talks about the substantial and alarming loss of territory suffered by the Roman empire in the east. A similar short passage can be found in the *Etymologies*, which cannot be dated because they are unfinished. It is interesting to note that in this case it is again the last historical event mentioned, as if it was concluding world history.[8] The wording is similar to his report on the conversion of the Goths to Catholicism in the same work.[9] In these cases the language is very matter-of-fact and implies no critical attitude to the use of force. If the dating of the *Chronicle* is correct, it was composed in the initial period of Sisebut's reign, when king and bishop were in contact at least intellectually, Sisebut asking Isidore for his *de natura rerum*, dedicating his astronomical poem to him in return.[10] The bishop may even have come to the royal court at Toledo.[11] Yet it is striking that none of the works he composed for the king belongs to his theological writings; they are rather of a more encyclopaedic nature, comprising first of all "profane" knowledge, although Christian tradition also plays a certain—if only secondary—role. This is true both for *de natura rerum* and for the *Etymologies*. The poem Sisebut wrote for Isidore does not contain even the slightest hint at theology. The character of the works both men dedicated to each other gives no indication whatsoever that their intellectual relations touched upon theological issues. Therefore it is doubtful that Sisebut appreciated or consulted Isidore as a theological adviser.

Isidore's most important statement concerning forced baptisms of Jews is contained in his *History of the Goths*, both of whose versions were finished after Sisebut's death, the shorter one around 620/21 and the longer one around 625: "At the beginning of his reign he forced the Jews into the Christian faith, indeed acting with zeal, 'but not according to knowledge', for he compelled by force those who should have been

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[6] For different suggestions dating the *Chronicle* between 614 and 616 see the introduction by Martín, CCL 112, 15*.

[7] *Iudaeos sui regni subditos ad Christi fidem convertit* (*chron.* 416; CCL 112, 204. 205).

[8] *Iudaei ⟨in⟩ Hispania Christiani efficiuntur* (*etym.* V, 39, 42).

[9] *Gothi catholici efficiuntur* (*etym.* V, 39, 41). See also *etym.* V, 39, 37: *Gothi haeretici efficiuntur*.

[10] Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville: Traité de la Nature*, Bordeaux 1960, 2.

[11] Ibid. 3 note (7): "Une amitié comme celle que révèle la préface du traité a difficilement pu naître par correspondance."

called to the faith through reason. But, as it is written, 'whether through chance or truth, Christ is to be proclaimed'".[12] At first sight the initial part of the passage contains a certain amount of criticism, although the king's good intention is admitted; the second part appears to be purely apologetic. However, the second quotation from Paul (Phil. 1, 18), which is used in a positive sense, is not suited to the situation of forced baptisms, because the apostle refers to people who are incited to preaching by selfish concerns, therefore they preach the gospel under a pretext (*per occasionem*; *profasei*). Isidore uses "occasion" with reference to an opportunity which presents itself for the achievement of a laudable aim.

This understanding of *occasio* is present both in other works of Isidore's and in Latin tradition;[13] it also appears in the old Latin translation of Prov. 9, 9.[14] Augustine quotes this old Latin form in a letter where he mentions the pressure exerted by imperial laws, which finally overcame the opposition of Donatists in Hippo.[15] He considers public force to be an effective means to put an end to the excuses (*occasiones*) of entrenched enemies.[16] Augustine even uses *occasio* to refer to indirect pressure by which the sons of the pagan rebel Nicomachus Flavianus were converted to Christianity.[17]

However, Paul does not refer to external circumstances but to the personal motives of preachers. Isidore also quotes Phil. 1, 18 in the *quaestiones*, referring to the sons born to Jacob by maid servants; he con-

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[12] Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 105. *Iudaeos ad fidem christianam permovens, aemulationem quidem ⟨Dei⟩ habuit, sed non secundum scientiam* (Rom. 10, 2); *potestate enim compulit, quos provocare fidei ratione oportuit, sed sicut scriptum est: sive per occasionem sive per veritatem ⟨donec⟩ Christus adnuntietur* (Phil. 1, 18) (*hist.* 60; Rodríguez Alonso, 270–272). There is no significant difference between both versions in this passage; the attribute *Dei* in the quotation from Romans, which is also contained in the Vulgate text, is merely found in the earlier, but not in the later version. This may be regarded as an intensification of Isidore's critical attitude towards Sisebut's zeal in the later version; the king's rashness precisely did not correspond to God's will, who may have been left out in the later version for that reason. For an analysis of the *History of the Goths* see Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, 12–24.

[13] For his understanding of *occasio* see *dif.* I, 133 (Codoñer, 154). The Latin parallels adduced by the editor suggest the translation "occasion, chance, opportunity" (Festus 188, 26; Marius Victorinus, *rhet.* I, 21). This interpretation also emerges from Isidore's wording in the *synonyma* (*syn.* II, 16. 18; PL 83, 849).

[14] *Da sapienti occasionem et sapientior erit* (there is no equivalent to this rendering of the Septuagint version in either the Hebrew or the Vulgate one).

[15] *ep.* 93, 17 (CSEL 34/2, 462).

[16] *ep.* 93, 18 (CSEL 34/2, 462 f.).

[17] *civ. Dei* V, 26 (CCL 47, 162).

cludes that this practice was justified because it was meant to increase the number of offspring.[18] There is a structural parallel between this passage and the one in the *History of the Goths*: in both cases the author attaches greater importance to the result of an action than to the prevailing circumstances that accompany its emergence.

In Visigothic literature Phil. 1, 18 is only quoted by two other authors. In a letter to bishop Eugenius II of Toledo, Braulio of Zaragoza discusses the question whether a priestly ordination performed by Eugenius's predecessor is valid; it was commanded by the king and only feigned by the bishop, who secretly replaced the blessing by a curse. According to Braulio, neither the responsible bishop nor other people who knew of the incident afterwards ever objected to the "false" priest administering the sacraments. Since the priest had performed priestly functions for many years, he should continue to do so in the future. Because everything was performed inside the Catholic church, the repetition of the ordination is said to be unnecessary.[19] The decisive point for Braulio is the unobjected performance of the rites in the church; the sacrament remains valid also if it has only been administered *per occasionem*. The sense attached by Braulio to the biblical quotation becomes clear if analyzed against the background of an earlier passage of his letter: the late bishop, who by shameful simulation did something else than he pretended (*qui dolo malo aliut egit et aliut simulavit*), is said to be responsible for his behaviour. The bishop's action (*agere*) structurally corresponds to the phrase *per veritatem* in the verse from Philippians, while *simulatio* is parallel to *per occasionem*. Like Isidore in the *History of the Goths*, Braulio attaches greater importance to the unchallenged performance of a ritual act, while the concrete circumstances receive less attention. Unlike Braulio and Isidore, Julian of Toledo follows Paul's argument when he quotes Phil. 1, 18; he refers it to the intention and moral qualities of preachers.[20]

The passage from Philippians had repeatedly been cited during the baptismal controversy in the 3rd century. It was used as proof by those who were in favour of the validity of baptisms administered by heretics. Cyprian of Carthage argued against this position, pointing to the fact

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[18] *quaest. in Gen.* 25, 18 (PL 83, 262).

[19] *ep.* 36 (Riesco Terrero, 144). See also Linehan, *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain*, Oxford 1993, 49.

[20] *antikeimenon* I, *interr.* 75 (PL 96, 628 f.).

that Paul does not talk of heretics or non-Christians, but of brothers.[21] Cyprian reminds his correspondent that Paul wanted to highlight the importance of spreading the gospel, therefore he attached less importance to the conditions under which preaching had to be carried out. In one of his letters, which was translated by Cyprian, also Firmilianus of Caesarea argued against the heretical position.[22]

Augustine's interpretation of Phil. 1, 18 is even closer to Paul than Cyprian's, because he refers it to selfish preachers, whose ministry is nonetheless acknowledged by the church in spite of their flawed intentions; the reason is that what matters first of all is the result of their preaching.[23] Most remarkable is the fact that Augustine endorses Cyprian's exegesis, according to which Phil. 1, 18 can only be referred to preaching inside the church.[24] Cassiodorus joins Augustine in following the Pauline tendency.[25]

A different exegetical trend can be found in Eusebius of Caesarea. In his Life of Constantine he describes the measures taken to contain and combat the cult of Venus and to promote Christianity in Heliopolis. The emperor is said to have favoured the church not only by prohibiting pagan practices but also by showing charity towards the poor.[26] Unlike Paul and Augustine, Eusebius does not criticize the intention of the "preacher", in this case Constantine; on the contrary, he praises his measures as an intelligent strategy to proclaim the gospel, completely disregarding the critical aspects of Paul's words, who objects to the insufficient motivation of preachers. The verse is rather adduced apologetically in order to justify the measures meant to foster conversions to Christianity.

The same is true for the Life of Porphyry of Gaza written by Mark the Deacon, who also wants to justify missionary efforts by quoting Phil. 1, 18, but in this case these do not consist in peaceful invitation, but rather in violent acts that terrified the inhabitants of Gaza to such an extent that many decided to accept baptism in 402.[27] According to the Life, bishop Porphyry tried to appease criticism voiced against

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[21] *ep.* 73, 14 (CSEL 3/2, 788).
[22] *ep.* 75, 20 (CSEL 3/2, 823).
[23] *enarr. in Ps.* 51, 4 (CCL 39, 625).
[24] *bapt.* IV, 7, 10 (CSEL 51, 232 f.). For a similar interpretation see Aug. *c. ep. Parm.* II, 18, 37 (CSEL 51, 92).
[25] *in Phil.* I (PL 68, 628).
[26] *vit. Const.* 58 (GCS Eus. 1, 105).
[27] *vit. Porph.* 72 (Grégoire/Kugener, 57).

these violent measures by claiming that sometimes virtues (*peristatikai aretai*) grow out of afflictions. Moreover, those converted out of fear could be won over internally with the passage of time, and if not the converts themselves, at least their offspring would in time be convinced of Christian truth.[28]

Jerome follows the latter exegetical tradition, alluding to conversions that do not come about voluntarily but as a result of external pressure.[29] His criticism is not directed at the intention of the "preacher", but at the lacking consent of those who are to be converted. This latter position is already quite close to Isidore's interpretation of Sisebut's actions in the *History of the Goths*.

It becomes clear that only part of the church fathers follow Paul in referring his criticism to the internal motives of preachers; these exegetes do not approve of flawed intentions, but they are prepared to tolerate them as long as the beneficial effects come about. From the 4th century onwards, Phil. 1, 18 was also adduced in apologetic contexts in order to excuse improper circumstances and imperfect conditions accompanying acts of preaching and conversion, yet without casting doubts at the laudability of the intentions of the "preachers". Isidore follows the latter tradition. He does not disapprove of Sisebut's intentions; on the contrary, he expressly acknowledges that his endeavours were aimed at God's cause. Yet unlike most of the patristic authors discussed above, his criticism is directed at the external methods of "preaching". Formally he adopts a patristic model of interpretation, but he changes the distribution of approval and disapproval. Many authors, following Paul, criticize the intention while approving of the methods (if these are mentioned at all), but Isidore directs his criticism precisely at the way conversion was achieved, agreeing with the intention on principle, even though he does not think the chances to be very promising. Both Isidore and the patristic authors mentioned above justify and acknowledge the result of preaching or converting because of the supposed beneficial effects. This is precisely the reason why Isidore adapted this tradition.

It is possible that he had a passage by Gregory the Great in mind in which the pope advised the use of persuasion and reason in con-

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[28] *vit. Porph.* 73 (Grégoire/Kugener, 58 f.); the latter argument is also adduced by Greg. Mag. *ep.* V, 7 (CCL 140, 273).
[29] *in Eph.* I, 2 (PL 26, 455 f.).

vincing Jews of the truth of Christianity.[30] Subsequently more parallels between Gregory's and Isidore's argument can be detected; the former also criticizes measures preventing Jews from observing their ancestral traditions under the pretext (!) of conversion; according to the pope such Christians act rather in their own than in God's name. In another letter Gregory points out that the *provocatio ad fidem* should be effected by preaching; the inner, mental conversion should be regarded as the proper aim.[31] These examples show that his approach towards method and aim of conversion was quite consistent.

In addition to Gregory the Great, Isidore may also have taken up a notion reported by John of Biclaro, formulated on the occasion of the conversion of the Goths by Reccared: "He then approached the priests of the Arian sect with words of wisdom (*sapienti colloquio*) and converted them to the Catholic faith through reason rather than force (*ratione potius quam imperio*)."[32] Seen against this background, the criticism voiced by Isidore with regard to Sisebut becomes even more marked, because the statement he puts between the two Pauline quotations is precisely an inversion of John of Biclaro's praise of Reccared: in contrast to Reccared, Sisebut exerted force, and unlike his revered predecessor he did not follow the path of prudent, intellectual argument in matters of religion and conversion. It is, therefore, unfounded to call Isidore Sisebut's "direttore di spirito" and to claim that it was this king who provided the image of a model ruler in Isidore's eyes;[33] this is rather true for

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[30] *Agendum ergo est ut ratione potius et mansuetudine provocati sequi nos velint, non fugere* (*ep.* XIII, 13, 2–5. 17 f.; CCL 140 A, 1013 f.). Yet the pope did not disapprove of the use of material incentives either if a *provocatio ad fidem* could be achieved; cf. *ep.* II, 50 (CCL 140, 141).

[31] *ep.* I, 45 (CCL 140, 59).

[32] *chron.* 85 (Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 73); *chron. ad a.* 587, 5 (Campos, 95). In this passage Reccared is credited with possessing *sapientia*, whereas Sisebut lacked *scientia* according to Isidore. See also *dif.* I, 19 (Codoñer, 94): *Prudentia in humanis rebus, sapientia in divinis tribuitur*. When heaping praise on King Suinthila, Isidore does not mention *scientia* as a royal virtue explicitly, unlike *prudentia*, whose lack is hinted at in Sisebut's case: "There were in Suinthila many virtues of royal majesty: faith, prudence, industry, keen scrutiny in judicial matters, and a vigorous concern for government" (Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 107; … *plurimae in eo regiae maiestatis virtutes: fides, prudentia, industria, in iudiciis examinatio strenua, in regendo cura praecipua*: *hist.* 64; Rodríguez Alonso, 278). All this underlines the lack of theological knowledge in Sisebut. For the distinction between divine, "theological" knowledge (*sapientia*) and knowledge of human things (*scientia*) in Augustine see Howe, "Weisheit und Demut bei Augustinus", *Gelehrte in der Antike*, Cologne *et al.* 2002, 232 note 29.

[33] Cannone, "Storia ed esegesi biblica nell'*Historia Gothorum* di Isidoro di Siviglia",

Reccared.[34] "Le portrait qu'Isidore fait du prince (sc. Sisebut) surprend par une certaine froideur."[35] This is remarkable because Isidore was much closer personally to Sisebut than to Reccared. He highlights the contrast between the two kings by his different assessment of the measures they took at the beginning of their respective reigns: Reccared converted to Catholicism,[36] thus paving the way for a successful continuation of his reign, while Sisebut had the Jews baptized by force,[37] thereby preparing the ground for a destabilization of the realm.

In his treatise *de natura rerum*, dedicated to Sisebut, Isidore constructed a parallel between the terms *fides* and *scientia*, putting them into corresponding positions; thereby he intended to describe Christian existence as resting on the clarity of divine revelation.[38] Elsewhere, those elected by God are said to be well aware of the content of divine revelation, especially as regards eschatological issues.[39] Therefore, it is not without significance that in his statement on forced baptisms in the *History of the Goths* Isidore denies that Sisebut possessed *scientia*. This is a veiled indication that he wanted to cast doubt on the late king's faith and on his election by God. A look at the anti-Jewish laws enacted by Sisebut reveals that he was indeed ignorant of church teaching regarding the economy of salvation, because he declares that everybody who does not obey his anti-Jewish injunctions will go to hell "with the Hebrews".[40] Sisebut obviously did not know the Pauline statements concerning the eschatological salvation of the Jews; from Isidore's per-

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Romanobarbarica 8 (1984/85), 30. The coincidence between Isidore's and Sisebut's designs is also claimed by Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law*, Berkeley *et al.* 1999, 107. But one should be careful to conclude that Sisebut and Isidore "similarly struggled against heretics and Jews" (ibid.), since the antiheretical activities of the former were not directed at heretics active on Spanish soil, while Isidore was very reluctant to pursue an openly antiheretical agenda; cf. *supra*, p. 175.

[34] Reydellet, *La Royauté dans la littérature latine de Sidoine Apollinaire à Isidore de Séville*, Rome 1981, 534–546.

[35] Ibid., 544.

[36] "In the very beginning of his reign" (Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 102; … *in ipsis enim regni sui exordiis*: *hist.* 52; Rodríguez Alonso, 260).

[37] "At the beginning of his reign" (Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 105; … *initio regni*: *hist.* 60; Rodríguez Alonso, 270).

[38] … *quia a delictorum tenebris liberatus homo ad lucem fidei scientiaeque pervenit* (*nat. rer.* 1, 3; Fontaine, 175, 15 f.). At the 3rd council of Toledo pagans, Jews and heretics wanting to convert were referred to as *volent⟨es⟩ converti ad scientiam veritatis* (*Regis professio fidei*; Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 72); *scientia* thus appeared as a synonym for Catholic faith.

[39] … *scientes praedictum a Domino esse* (*sent.* I, 25, 4; CCL 111, 79).

[40] *LV* XII, 2, 14 (MGH, LL, I, 1, 423).

spective this lack of theological knowledge provided the basis for the forced conversions decreed against the teaching of the church.

In the *sententiae* Isidore stresses the necessary submission of rulers under the principles of faith, which of course presupposes a certain degree of theological knowledge in that faith, the *scientia fidei*.[41] Isidore only requests kings to "preach" faith through their laws, but he does not urge the use of force. Preaching and instruction are not only carried out by words, but also by law and exemplary behaviour. These statements can also be read as indirect, veiled criticism of Sisebut, who failed to submit to the guidance of ecclesiastical authorities in spite or even because of his excessive zeal. In this connection it is remarkable that Gregory the Great had explained the function of kings inside the church by pointing to their knowledge (in matters of government).[42]

By his rash actions against the Jews shortly after the beginning of his reign Sisebut also disregarded the virtue of *patientia principum* outlined in Isidore's *sententiae*. Isidore admonishes rulers to take appropriate timing (*kairos*) into consideration when acting as instructors and educators of their subjects.[43] The category of *kairos* is of special importance in matters touching upon salvation history and eschatology, of which the conversion of the Jews is a major part. Moreover, patience ranks among the virtues that please God.[44]

It is probable that Isidore's statement on Sisebut in his *History of the Goths* contains some criticism of the king's behaviour, who failed to seek ecclesiastical advice despite his manifest lack of theological knowledge. This hypothesis can be substantiated by comparing a passage in the *sententiae* where Isidore advocates the intervention of rulers in affairs of the church only in cases when clerics are unsuccessful in their admonitions; this means that the ruler—as a layman—has to follow ecclesiastical guidance in church affairs.[45] According to Isidore, the king does not

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[41] *sent.* III, 51, 3 (CCL 111, 304). This *disciplina* is based on Christ's revelation: … *acceptam a Christo disciplinam* (*etym.* VIII, 3, 3). In the high middle ages Hugh of St. Victor made the achievement of *scientia* dependent on *disciplina* (*did.* III, 12; FC 27, 250).

[42] *Reges quippe sunt sancti praedicatores Ecclesiae, qui et commissos sibi recte disponere, et sua bene regere corpora sciunt* (*moral.* IV, 29, 56; CCL 143, 200). See also the interpretation of self-restraint *moral.* XI, 17, 26 (CCL 143 A, 601): *Principes etenim non immerito vocantur qui magno consilii iudicio suis cogitationibus semper principantur omnesque stultos motus potestate sapientiae comprimunt.*

[43] … *aptum tempus correctionis expectet* (*sent.* III, 50, 1; CCL 111, 301).

[44] *sent.* III, 62, 1 (CCL 111, 328).

[45] … *nisi ut, quod non praevalet sacerdos efficere per doctrinae sermonem, potestas hoc imperet per disciplinae terrorem* (*sent.* III, 51, 4; CCL 111, 304). In the Latin church, especially at the

stand out among the rest of the faithful; he does not credit him with a
special position before God. What is more, the ruler is entitled to take
appropriate measures in matters touching upon faith and church dis-
cipline only inside the church; he has no right to take action against
non-Christians.[46] Royal intervention in church matters is thus depen-
dent on two conditions: first the aim has to be designated by priests,
probably bishops, and second the scope of possible action is limited to
the church itself. By his decree of forced baptism Sisebut infringed both
these restrictions, which were, however, only formulated after his death,
when the consequences of his policies had become apparent.

Isidore's belated criticism was certainly also due to his relization that
Sisebut's measures did more harm than good, destabilizing society on
the long run; Sisebut's actions were not in accordance with Isidore's
maxim that the actions of rulers should not be detrimental but bene-
ficial to their subjects.[47] What is more, the king disregarded traditional
principles of Roman law which permitted Jews to exercise their reli-
gion.[48] It is true that the king did not infringe laws enacted by himself,
but those issued by emperors, which had been respected by his royal
predecessors.[49]

In this connection it is instructive to ask whether Isidore took the
Jewish policies of Christian Roman emperors to be normative for the
present. His knowledge will mainly have been limited to laws con-
tained in the *Breviarum Alarici*. Contemporary Jews still held the rank of
Roman citizens. Roman emperors before Justinian had never decreed
forced baptisms. Therefore, Isidore's predilection for origins cannot
have fuelled a restrictive attitude towards the Jews. The heritage of
antiquity rather pointed in the opposite direction, providing for a more
tolerant attitude, both regarding "profane" classical tradition and the
Jews.[50] Sisebut's policy of forced baptisms was a departure from tra-
dition. It is interesting to compare his approach to the laws issued

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papal curia, the influence of rulers on church affairs was increasingly resented after
the controversy of the three chapters; cf. Amory, *People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy*,
Cambridge 1997, 233 f. Visigothic kings never tried to intervene in dogmatic matters,
least of all in questions relating to the council of Chalcedon.

[46] *sent*. III, 51, 5 (CCL 111, 304).

[47] *Prodesse ergo debet populis principatus, non nocere* (*sent*. III, 49, 3; CCL 111, 300).

[48] *Iustum est principem legibus obtemperare suis* (*sent*. III, 51, 1; CCL 111, 303).

[49] Reydellet, *La Royauté dans la littérature latine de Sidoine Apollinaire à Isidore de Séville*,
Rome 1981, 595.

[50] For the notion of tolerance as regards Jews and "pagan" culture cf. Fontaine,
"Isidor von Sevilla", *RAC* 18 (1998), 1011 and 1021.

by the Ostrogothic King Theodoric for the protection of Jews, which may have been intended as open criticism of Byzantine legislation and policies regarding the Jews; by taking recourse to Roman legislation the Arian king—unlike the emperor—wanted to uphold and restore that tradition.[51] From this perspective, Theodoric's policies towards the Jews are in keeping with his programme of *reparatio imperii*, restoring the laws of the classical period, the principate.[52] By contrast, the Visigothic legislation of the 7th century was not geared to the ideal of a *reparatio antiquitatis*; precisely in the legal sphere an *imitatio imperii* cannot be established. Compared to Theodoric's programme, the Jewish policies of 7th-century Visigothic monarchs who took action against the Jews no longer followed the ideal of antiquity as a model for present policies and legislation.[53]

The criticism voiced by Isidore in his *History of the Goths* becomes even clearer when taking a closer look at the terms he uses. The king is said not to have acted according to knowledge (*secundum scientiam*), but without a proper understanding of scripture and church teaching. The peak of biblical exegesis, the spiritual sense of scripture, was precisely marked by *scientia* and *doctrina*, which were regarded as the key to faith.[54] Moreover, *scientia* is one of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit,[55] while imperfect *scientia* belongs to the past epoch of the Old Testament.[56] Isidore praises his brother Leander for combining knowledge and faith.[57] Elsewhere he stresses the necessity to adapt one's actions to knowledge acquired by listening to sermons.[58] Following the tradi-

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[51] Brennecke, "*Imitatio-reparatio-continuatio*. Die Judengesetzgebung im Ostgotenreich Theoderichs des Großen als *reparatio imperii*?", *ZAC* 4 (2000), 144.

[52] See ibid., 146.

[53] Theodoric also followed a totally different conceptualization of the political community of the Goths, according to which the *populus* (unlike the Visigothic *gens*) of the Goths should rule together with the Romans (*uterque populus*) over the western *gentes*; see Werner, "Volk, Nation, Nationalismus, Masse: Mittelalter", *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* 7 (1992), 188f.

[54] For the biblical and ecclesiological importance of *doctrina* for Isidore cf. *supra*, p. 171.

[55] *quaest. in Gen.* 7, 12 (PL 83, 231).

[56] *quaest. in Jos.* 14, 2 (PL 83, 378). For the parallelization of *scientia/doctrina* and *fides* cf. *ort. et obit.* 72 (Chaparro Gómez, 209) and *nat. rer.* 7, 6 (Fontaine, 203, 54f.); see also *lib. num.* 1, 1 (PL 83, 179). For an association of *fides* and *scientia* cf. *dif.* II, 39, 154 (PL 83, 94). For a combination of *fides* and *sacramentum scientiae* see *all.* 112 (PL 83, 115). For *intelligentia* and *fides* cf. *etym.* VII, 2, 47.

[57] *chron.* 408 a (CCL 112, 201): … *scientia et fide insignis habetur*.

[58] *syn.* II, 100 (PL 83, 868).

tion of ancient philosophy he attaches great importance to knowledge,[59]
but correct knowledge is always oriented towards God and his revela-
tion.[60] When he blames Sisebut for lack of knowledge, this comes even
close to error and ignorance, which belong to the distinguishing marks
of heresy.[61] It is instructive to compare Isidore's assessment of Sisebut
to the description of Priscillian by Sulpicius Severus. The late Roman
"heretic" from Spain is presented as an educated person (*profanarum
rerum scientia*), who is, however, led into error by false zeal (*pravo studio*).[62]
In addition, the alleged lack of knowledge was one of the stereotypical
accusations levelled by Christians against Jews.[63]

   In view of the long tradition of Christian *scientia* and *doctrina*, Isidore's
assessment of Sisebut, who was proud of his classical learning and
of his orthodoxy, has to be understood as harsh criticism. According
to his wording in the *History of the Goths*, the king did not convert
the Jews *ratione fidei*, but by using his power (*potestate*). In the *sententiae*
Isidore regards kings as bearers of a power inside the church, which
they have received from God and for which they are accountable to
him.[64] Yet Sisebut's forced baptisms not only put the cohesion of soci-
ety in jeopardy but also the integrity of the church, which should have
been safeguarded by the king. There is a marked difference between
Sisebut's policies and Isidore's definition of kingship: according to his
etymological deduction, *rex* is derived from *regere*, which he translates
as *recte facere*;[65] yet correct and just action is inconceivable without *sci-
entia*, which first of all comprises knowledge of faith, the teaching of

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   [59] *sent.* II, 1, 11 (CCL 111, 93). See also *syn.* II, 66 (PL 83, 860).
   [60] *sent.* II, 29, 11 (CCL 111, 149). *sent.* II, 1–3 *sapientia* is even treated before *fides* and
caritas; however, *fides* belongs—alongside *spes* and *caritas*—to the *summae virtutes*, whereas
doctrina and *scientia* merely rank among the *virtutes mediae*, which can lead to good things,
but which may also be misused for bad ends. For Isidore's view on *scientia* see also *dif.*
II, 38, 147 (PL 83, 93).
   [61] *Nabuchodonosor rex … haereticorum plebem … in ignorantiae confusionem abduxit* (*all.* 127;
PL 83, 116). Ignorance can not only lead to heresy, but also to sin (*syn.* II, 65; PL 83,
860).
   [62] Sulp. Sev. *chron.* 2, 46, 2 (SC 441, 332).
   [63] Cf. e.g. Leo Magn. *tract.* 32, 3 (CCL 138, 167).
   [64] *sent.* III, 51, 6 (CCL 111, 304). For a general picture of the relationship between
Visigothic kings and church councils see Schwöbel, *Synode und König im Westgotenreich.
Grundlagen und Formen ihrer Beziehung*, Cologne/Vienna 1982 and Anton, "Der König und
die Reichskonzilien im westgotischen Spanien", *HJb* 92 (1972), 257–281.
   [65] *sent.* III, 48, 7 (CCL 111, 298). See also *etym.* IX, 3, 4 (Reydellet, 121). For the
Gregorian and Augustinian roots cf. Reydellet, *La Royauté dans la littérature latine de Sidoine
Apollinaire à Isidore de Séville*, Rome 1981, 576. See also id., "La conception du souverain
chez Isidore de Séville", *Isidoriana*, León 1961, 457–466.

the church and of the divine economy of salvation.[66] A fairly critical position towards Sisebut is also detectable in Isidore's assessment of his classical education. It is not without irony when Isidore describes the king, who was proud of his intellectual capacity, as being "partly" imbued with literary culture.[67] The imperfect state of his literary horizon is matched by his equally deficient theological knowledge, which becomes apparent precisely in his dealing with the Jews.[68]

At first sight, Isidore seems to be praising the rhetorical aptitude of the king,[69] but this becomes more nuanced when compared to his assessment of verbosity and worldly eloquence in the *sententiae*.[70] The negative connotation of his phrase *eloquio nitidus* becomes even clearer when seen against the background of Isidore's view concerning the eloquence of the gentiles, which lacks inner wisdom.[71] The direct and indirect statements in his works and his attitude at the 4th council of Toledo, which will be discussed below, amount to a dissociation from the politics and person of Sisebut, although only after the event. Even statements that do not directly refer to the king can be taken as veiled criticism of the latter's self-image. Sisebut imagined himself to possess theological knowledge, which he thought he could instrumentalize for his own salvation, but he did not understand the real sense of scripture. His "wisdom" being limited to superficial appearances, he did not achieve any understanding of the most important thing, the truth.[72]

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[66] Orthodox doctrine, especially concerning eschatological issues, has been entrusted to the clergy (*quaest. in Ex.* 59, 5; PL 83, 319). For the administration of *scientia* by the clergy cf. also *quaest. in Jos.* 16, 1 (PL 83, 378): … *hi qui in Ecclesia Dei, scientiae operam dantes, doctrinae gratiam administrant.*

[67] *Scientia litterarum ex parte inbutus* (*hist.* 60; Rodríguez Alonso, 272). The translation by Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 105 ("imbued with no little knowledge of letters") seems to be inaccurate at this point.

[68] … *aemulationem quidem habuit, sed non secundum scientiam* (*hist.* 60).

[69] … *fuit autem eloquio nitidus* (*hist.* 60); "eloquent in speech" (Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 105).

[70] *Horret enim sapientia spumeum verborum ambitum, ac fucum mundialis eloquentiae inflatis sermonibus peroratum* (*sent.* II, 29, 12; CCL 111, 149). For Isidore's cautious assessment of Sisebut because of the king's pretentious Latin see Fear, "Introduction", *Lives of the Visigothic Fathers*, Liverpool 1997, XXIII.

[71] *Gentilium dicta exterius verborum eloquentia nitent, interius vacua virtutis sapientia manent* (*sent.* III, 13, 3; CCL 111, 236). See also *dif.* II, 39, 148 (PL 83, 93): *Eloquentia sine sapientia valere non potest.* Eloquence without wisdom contradicts the classical rhetorical ideal; see Nederman, "The Union of Wisdom and Eloquence before the Renaissance. The Ciceronian Orator in Medieval Thought", *JMH* 18 (1992), 75–95.

[72] Cf. *sent.* III, 11, 1f. (CCL 111, 233).

Isidore's statement about the policies of Sisebut against the Jews receives an almost ironical touch because he applies words from Paul's letter to the Romans to the king which the apostle had referred to the Jews.[73] Paul admits that the Jews strive eagerly towards God (*zēlon theou echousin*), but according to him this is not a result of any correct understanding of God or of faith (*ou kat' epignōsin*). Isidore credits Sisebut with *aemulatio*; he mostly uses this term with a negative connotation, which adds to the ironical bent of his assessment.[74] He refers the word mainly not to eagerness in a positive sense, but to selfish zeal that is contrary to God's will and to the destination of man. Moreover, excessive zeal is a sign of impatience, it springs from an inability to wait until the end of time, which is only known to God.[75]

In the context of his criticism of Sisebut's policies in the *History of the Goths*, Isidore recommends the following missionary strategy: "… who should have been called to the faith through reason" (*quos provocare fidei ratione oportuit*). For a better understanding of this passage the terms *provocare/provocatio* will be analyzed comparatively in the following paragraphs. When Isidore discusses rhetoric in the *Etymologies*, *provocatio* is reckoned among the third of the three *genera dicendi*, it belongs to the *grandiloquium*, which is used for matters of the highest importance.[76] One form is the request to take a decision,[77] for which the biblical prophets provide outstanding examples. It is highly significant that

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[73] Rom. 10, 1–3. An interesting parallel from the high middle ages is a letter by Bernard of Clairvaux, written at the time of the second crusade, in which he lashes out at the persecution of Jews by crusaders. Bernard uses Rom. 10, 2, acknowledging the zeal of the crusaders, yet deploring their lack of *scientia*; cf. *ep.* 363, 6 (Sämtl. Werke III, ed. Winkler, Innsbruck 1992, 658). Subsequently Bernard quotes the passages Ps. 58, 12 and Rom. 11, 25f. (*plenitudo gentium introierit*), which had often been referred to the Jews in early Christian literature. Moreover he highlights the role of the Jews as witnesses of the church, their testimony being made by their humiliation and dispersal.

[74] *etym.* XV, 1, 9: … *in aemulationem Babyloniae urbis*; *all.* 88 (PL 83, 112); *pro.* 69 (PL 83, 171); *sent.* III, 32, 4 (CCL 111, 270); *eccl. off.* II, 2, 2 (CCL 113, 53). Yet see also *dif.* I, 91 (Codoñer, 130). In contrast to Isidore's usual tendency King Egica uses the term in a positive sense in his speech delivered at the 15th council of Toledo (*praef.*; Vives, *Concilios visigóticos e hispano-romanos*, Barcelona/Madrid 1963, 452). For Isidore's criticism of Sisebut's "hazy zeal" see Stow, *Alienated Minority. The Jews of Medieval Latin Europe*, Cambridge/Mass. and London 1992, 50.

[75] For impatience as a characteristic of Jews and heretics cf. *quaest. in Gen.* 8, 11 (PL 83, 236). Subsequently also bad Christians are included in this group.

[76] *etym.* II, 17, 2f. (Marshall, 67).

[77] *Aliae* (sc. *sententiae sunt*) *exhortativae, cum ad sententiam provocamus* (*etym.* II, 21, 20; Marshall, 85).

Isidore uses *provocare* exclusively with reference to prophets in the treatise *de fide catholica*, the only exception being the calling of disciples by Jesus himself.[78]

When discussing the prophecy of Ezechiel in the *prooemia*, he highlights the complementary relationship between repentance and conversion, qualifying the meaning of *provocare* by using *admonere* ("admonish") in a parallel position.[79] In the same work he maintains that the author of the letter of Jude admonishes to repent.[80] It becomes clear that in Isidore's mind there is a tradition of calling upon people to repent, stretching from biblical prophets to the apostles. For Isidore—as for Augustine—the call to believe is primarily made by God himself,[81] but also by people who are especially commissioned to do so. The parallel terms *provocare*—*admonere*, which he applies to prophets (and apostles) in the past, are used to characterize the episcopal office in the present.[82]

In this context it is significant that according to some manuscripts of the *Chronicle*, *provocare* is used in a religious sense also for a king, namely Reccared.[83] Even though Isidore does not use this verb as a technical

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[78] In two more cases the use of *provocare* or *provocatrix* depends on the biblical text that is interpreted; cf. *fid. cath.* II, 9, 1 (Is. 63, 10; PL 83, 514) and *fid. cath.* II, 12, 5 (Zeph. 3, 1; PL 83, 518). The calling of the sons of Zebedee by Jesus is described as follows: … *provocans eos, de piscatoribus piscium piscatores reddidit hominum, scilicet, ut praedicationis reti cunctos credentes de profundo saeculi huius extraherent … quod specialiter ad conversionem pertinet gentium* (*fid. cath.* I, 55, 2; PL 83, 493). The five passages where *provocare* is used in *de fide catholica* refer all to biblical prophets; cf. *fid. cath.* II, 16, 3 (PL 83, 525: Jeremiah), *fid. cath.* II, 24, 2 (PL 83, 530: Isaiah), *fid. cath.* II, 1, 4 (PL 83, 500: the psalmist). Amos is said to been commissioned by God to call upon the Jews to convert (*fid. cath.* II, 2, 7; PL 83, 507). A synonym for *provocare* is *hortare*: … *propheta hortatur omnes gentes, provocans eas ad laudem Dei* (*fid. cath.* I, 56, 5; PL 83, 494f.). Also in his other works *provocare* is used for actions of prophets, e.g. Joel (*pro.* 64; PL 83, 170), or Jeremiah (*pro.* 51; PL 83, 168), but also for Solomon, considered to be the author of the Song of Songs (*pro.* 38; PL 83, 165). In the *allegoriae* Isidore uses *provocare* for the dialogue between Jesus and the Samaritan woman, which he interprets as an invitation for baptism and spiritual understanding of scripture (*all.* 235; PL 83, 128).

[79] *pro.* 58 (PL 83, 169).

[80] … *ad poenitentiam cohortetur* (*pro.* 104; PL 83, 178).

[81] See Isidore's interpretation of the primordial fall *quaest. in Gen.* 5, 3 (PL 83, 220) and also *quaest. in Gen.* 15, 5 (PL 83, 245).

[82] *Quapropter qui neglegit recta facere, desinat recta **docere**; prius quippe semetipsum **corrigere** debet, qui alios ad bene vivendum **ammonere** studet, ita ut in omnibus semetipsum formam vivendi praebeat, cunctosque ad bonum opus et doctrina et opere **provocet*** (*eccl. off.* II, 5, 16; CCL 113, 62; my emphasis). For the method of preaching see also *quaest. in Num.* 29, 2 (PL 83, 353).

[83] *Gothi (quoque) Reccaredo (religiosissimo) principe innitente (/provocante) ad fidem catholicam revertuntur (/convertuntur)* (*chron.* 408; CCL 112, 200. 201).

term, it becomes clear that in a religious context it is used mostly for prophets, teachers, holy men and bishops.[84] Reccared's inclusion in this tradition can come as no surprise, given the fact that he was acclaimed at the 3rd council of Toledo as an apostolic ruler. The author of the *Vitas Patrum Emeretensium*, writing in the 630s, describes Reccared as a *praedicator*.[85] Isidore uses the metaphor of preaching with reference to this king, too.[86] Sisebut wanted to be part of this tradition, yet Isidore disapproved of this claim by assessing the policies of the king from several negative perspectives.[87] By highlighting Sisebut's lack of knowledge he also denies him the capacity to admonish his subjects, because teaching and admonishing have to be based precisely on knowledge of church doctrine.[88]

The use of *provocare* in the sense of "to instruct" and "to educate" was ancient church practice. In the Apostolic Tradition (3rd century) the faithful are admonished to instruct one another and to encourage catechumens.[89] Significantly, in the parallel tradition of this text *provocare* is replaced by *instruere*.[90] Even though there is no evidence that Isidore knew this source, it sheds some interesting light on his phrase *provocare*

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[84] In the chapter *de exemplis sanctorum* he explains in the *sententiae* that the example of the saints should encourage (*provocare*) the faithful to acts of *imitatio* (*sent.* II, 11, 6; CCL 111, 116).

[85] *VPE* V, 9 (CCL 116, 80; Fear, *Lives of the Visigothic Fathers*, 92); Teillet (*Des Goths à la nation gothique*, Paris 1984, 551) compares this to the statement of Gregory the Great about Reccared at the end of his chapter on Hermenegild (*dial.* III, 31, 8; SC 260, 388): *Nec mirum quod verae fidei praedicator factus est, qui frater est martyris.* Also Remigius presented Clovis as a *praedicator fidei catholicae* (MGH, Epp. 3, 114).

[86] *hist.* 53 (Rodríguez Alonso, 262): … *praedicans trium personarum unitatem in deum.* Later also Charlemagne was credited with apostolic qualities because of his christianization of the Saxons (*apostolus noster; ferrea quodammodo lingua praedicavit*: *Translatio Sancti Liborii*, MGH, SS IV, 151); it is significant that precisely these alleged apostolic merits were used to account for his imperial rank; cf. Ehlers, "Die Sachsenmission als heilsgeschichtliches Ereignis", *Vita Religiosa im Mittelalter*, Berlin 1999, 42.

[87] An exception is the use of *provocare* in the acts of the so-called 3rd council of Seville, which would have met under Isidore's presidency. In this case it is used also with reference to Sisebut's forced baptisms: … *de his quos non proprie mentis conversio, sed sola regalis auctoritas ad fidei praemium provocavit* (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 482f.). This stray canon is contradictory for various reasons; cf. *infra*, p. 220.

[88] The indispensable role of knowledge for teaching is highlighted by a later canon: *dum enim indocti docere appetunt … praesumptionem doctrinae discendi studiis anteponunt* (VII Toledo *c.* 5; Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 353).

[89] *Itaque, omnes fideles, agentes et memoriam eorum facientes et invicem docentes et catecuminos provocantes* (trad. apost. 41; FC 1, 306–308).

[90] *Haec autem, vos omnes fideles, si perficitis et facitis eorum memoriam, docentes invicem et instruentes catechumenos ut faciant* (ibid.).

fidei ratione: it touches upon the instruction of the faithful, both before (during the catechumenate) and after baptism. Although the conditions of the third century were very much different from those of the seventh, the earlier source contributes to a clarification of the intellectual and legal background of Isidore's wording. Another element of this tradition is the letter of bishop Severus of Minorca from 418, where *provocare ad fidem* is used in the sense of "to preach, to make a speech".[91]

The phrase *ratio fidei* is used only once in Isidore's entire œuvre, namely in the passage of the *History of the Goths* discussed here.[92] The following analysis intends to show the patristic tradition behind these terms and their combination. Lactantius rejected every kind of violence and force in religious matters, advocating instead the use of words in the process of listening, teaching and arguing with recourse to reason.[93] The use of verbal argument recommended by Lactantius is transformed by Isidore into the struggle of orthodox theologians with spiritual weapons.[94] The phrase *ratio fidei* is also used by Augustine in a sermon against the Pelagians.[95] In this passage he takes recourse to the Lord's Prayer in order to show that Pelagius's teaching is not in accordance with this central prayer of Christianity, therefore his doctrine is said to lack proper theological foundation. The phrase appears a second time in his argument against the Pelagian Julian of Eclanum; Augustine adduces the argument of Ambrose against the Manichees as an example for the approach *ratione fidei*.[96] Following a neoplatonic model the bishop of Milan defined evil as lack of good, thus destroying the intellectual foundation of Manichean dualism. The argument *ratione fidei catholicae* therefore consists in a coherent and logical refutation of heretical arguments, until the opponent finally finds himself convicted of error.

In an anonymous treatise *de trinitate* from 5th-century North Africa, which was formerly ascribed to Fulgentius of Ruspe, the Catholics' anti-

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[91] *Theodorus cum contionari ad plebem suam eosque ad fidem Christi provocare disponeret* (*ep. Sev.* 19, 1; Bradbury, 108).

[92] For his understanding of *ratio* and its relationship to knowledge—whose lack he deplores in Sisebut—see *quaest. in Gen.* 1, 15 (PL 83, 212).

[93] *inst. div.* V, 19, 11–14 (SC 204, 232); cf. the translation by A. Bowen and P. Garnsey, *Lactantius: Divine Institutes* (TTH 40), Liverpool 2003, 320f. See Digeser, "Lactantius, Porphyry, and the Debate Over Religious Toleration", *Journal of Roman Studies* 88 (1998), 129–146.

[94] *all.* 68 (PL 83, 110).

[95] *s.* 181, 6 (PL 38, 982).

[96] *c. Iulian.* I, 44 (PL 44, 671).

Arian argument is described as an exposition of the *ratio fidei*, which is said to be a formulation of church teaching using the words of biblical quotations.[97] Facundus of Hermiane, spokesman of the Catholic opposition against Justinian, highlights the orthodoxy of Theodore of Mopsuestia in a statement combining *ratio* and *fides*; although these terms are not directly linked, they illustrate Theodore's orthodoxy by showing him to be part of Catholic tradition, which served as a guideline for Theodore's teaching, and which is subsequently explained by the author himself.[98]

For Isidore, *provocatio* also refers to verbal argument, to the exposition of Christian doctrine and hermeneutics; such an argument always rests on the active participation of God. When reading holy scripture—one may add: also when listening to sermons[99]—conversion is brought about by divine inspiration.[100] This is close to Gregory the Great's statement that the conversion of Jews is effected by God's inspiration.[101] When Isidore recommends *provocatio fidei ratione* as the proper method for converting the Jews he hints at the tradition established by Israelitic prophets during the period of the Old Testament, who called upon the Israelites to convert both by promising future salvation and by pointing to divine justice and punishment. With regard to the present, *provocatio fidei ratione* designates preaching and ecclesiastical teaching.[102] Since Isidore expects the conversion of the Jews only in the eschatological future[103] this statement should rather be taken as a declaration of principle, but not as a practical injunction. His lack of interest in contem-

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[97] Anon. *De trinitate* 2 (CCL 90, 240).

[98] *Pro defensione trium capitulorum* IX, 3, 10 (CCL 90 A, 273).

[99] *quaest. in Gen.* 1, 6 (PL 83, 210): ... *ut legentes audiant verbum Dei.*

[100] ... *ad fidem divino inspiramine provocari* (*sent.* III, 13, 5; CCL 111, 237).

[101] He describes converts as *qui de Iudaica superstitione ad christianam fidem Deo aspirante venire desiderant* (*ep.* VI, 29; CCL 140, 401). Also the castigation of those who do not lead a proper Christian life after baptism is left to God himself; cf. *hom. in Ev.* 36, 9 (CCL 141, 339–341). In Alcuin's *vita Willibrordi* there are several stories about divine (rather than human) revenge, which may be an expression of criticism at the forced conversion of the Saxons; cf. Wood, "The Use and Abuse of Latin Hagiography in the Early Medieval West", *East and West: Modes of Communication*, Leiden *et al.* 1999, 96.

[102] *quaest. in I Reg.* 12, 2 (PL 83, 401). With regard to the past Isidore states (*all.* 229; PL 83, 127): ... *doctores qui ... docendo multos in fide acquisierunt.* In his allegorical interpretation of the conquest of Jericho by the Israelites he maintains that victory was only gained by preaching; in the present this is equivalent to worldwide preaching (*quaest. in Jos.* 7, 2 f.; PL 83, 374). See also *quaest. in Jos.* 12, 3 (PL 83, 377).

[103] For his expectation that Elijah will preach the gospel to the Jews at the end of times cf. *quaest. in Gen.* 14, 5 (PL 83, 243) and *quaest. in Iud.* 6, 5 (PL 83, 387). See also *pro.* 63 (PL 83, 170).

porary Judaism is a clear indication that he did not attach priority to preaching the gospel to them. His attitude to the conversion of non-Christians is illustrated in his interpretation of David's fight against the Amalekites.[104] Significantly the initiative lies with Christ alone, who chooses and calls upon preachers who spread the gospel; through their knowledge (*scientia*) they nourish the faithful. The proper means of conversion is precisely the thing entirely lacking in Sisebut.

The preceding analysis showed that Isidore was very critical of both Sisebut's person and policies, although his criticism was a very indirect one, which only emerges as a result of a comparative analysis of different works.[105] The fact that he mentions the forced baptisms as the first "event" of Sisebut's reign does not mean that he valued them positively; they should rather be taken as a bad omen for the history of his rule, especially if one takes those statements into account that Isidore made during the 620s and 630s.[106] Even granted that this appreciation of Sisebut's policies only emerged after the king's death, his treatise *de fide catholica* should not be considered a "theological manifesto for King Sisebut's conversion of the Jews".[107] Isidore does not call for active mission among the Jews, he expects their conversion only at the end of times (which he did not expect to be at hand immediately, as indicated by his "optimistic" view of history and the works both he—and Sisebut—composed during the 610s),[108] and he repeats standard patristic complaints that the Jews stubbornly refuse to follow Christian exegesis of their holy scriptures.

For an analysis of Isidore's position on forced baptisms it is also necessary to have a look at the decisions taken at church councils under his presidency; in the formulation of the conciliar acts he must have taken an active part. At the beginning of the 620s a provincial

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[104] *quaest. in I Reg.* 19, 3 (PL 83, 406). See also *quaest. in III Reg.* 4, 2 (PL 83, 417).

[105] Therefore one should be careful to conclude that Isidore "usually maintain(ed) the policies of Sisebut, even after the latter's death" (Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law*, Berkeley *et al.* 1999, 107).

[106] Against Albert, "Un nouvel examen de la politique anti-juive wisigothique", *REJ* 135 (1976), 22 and Rabello, "Sisebuto re di Spagna (612–621) ed il battesimo forzato", *Rassegna Mensile di Israel* 51 (1985), 34: "… la sua ammirazione per Sisebuto sarà molto più grande della critica, ed il re diviene per lui l'esempio del re pio e religioso: *religiosissimus princeps.*" This is rather true for Reccared, but not Sisebut. For Reccared as Isidore's "ideal king", almost styled in a hagiographic manner, cf. Messmer, *Hispania-Idee und Gotenmythos*, Zurich 1960, 121.

[107] Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law*, Berkeley *et al.* 1999, 120.

[108] For Isidore's optimistic interpretation of contemporary history cf. *supra*, p. 158 f.

synod convened in Seville, the so-called 3ʳᵈ council of Seville, whose
acts have been preserved only in very fragmentary form.[109] Only one
canon of this assembly is known today, and it is remarkable that it
shows no criticism of Sisebut's actions, although the king was already
dead at the time.[110] The statements of the council are contradictory;[111]
it is surprising that the fathers refer to regulations of ancient canon
law, reiterated by the council of Agde in 506, according to which the
faith of aspirants should be tested over a prolonged period of time
before baptism; this injunction was clearly disregarded by Sisebut's
forced conversions. The admonition that Jews should not replace their
children by already baptized ones of Christian neighbours is a clear
indication that the problem of "relapsing" Jews was already acute at
the time. The "Judaizing" practices the clergy are requested to watch
out for are identical to those prohibited by Sisebut according to the
Leges Visigothorum.[112]

The clergy assembled at the Sevillian council endorsed at least part
of the late king's legislation, even though he had never sought eccle-
siastical approval in his lifetime. According to Séjourné, the praise
of Sisebut expressed by the fathers should be taken as evidence of
Isidore's subservience towards the dead king; however, precisely dur-

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[109] This canon is part of one recension of Visigothic canon law, the *Iuliana*, a version
of the *Hispana*; scholars have attributed it to the so-called 3ʳᵈ Sevillian synode; cf.
Séjourné, *Saint Isidore de Séville. Le dernier père de l'église*, Paris 1929, 30–32 and Stocking,
"Martianus, Aventius and Isidore: Provincial Councils in Seventh-Century Spain",
EME 6 (1997), 173 note 25. See the edition of Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección
canónica V, 482–485 (*Ex concilio spalitano*, X). García Iglesias (*Los Judíos en la España
Antigua*, Madrid 1978, 142) dates the council between 619 and 630. Hernández ("La
España visigoda frente al problema de los judíos", *La Ciencia Tomista* 94, 1967, 677)
opts for 624, as do Séjourné, 31 ("aux environs de 624") and Stocking, 171; Orlandis
(*Die Synoden auf der Iberischen Halbinsel bis zum Einbruch des Islam*, Paderborn *et al.* 1981,
143) prefers a date between 622 and 624; see also id., "Tras la huella de un concilio
isidoriano de Sevilla", *AHI* 4 (1995), 237–246. The decisions that have been preserved
do not contain any measures or injunctions as regards the attitude to be taken towards
unbaptized Jews.

[110] Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 482f. See González Salinero,
Las conversiones forzosas de los judíos en el reino visigodo, Rome 2000, 21 and 35f.

[111] Drews, "Jews as Pagans? Polemical Definitions of Identity in Visigothic Spain",
EME 11 (2002), 189–207.

[112] A parallel between Isidore's thinking and the wording of the Sevillian council can
be detected at the end, where it says: … *ut quos religio reprimere non valet, terror ac disciplina
saecularis emendet* (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 485); cf. *sent*. III,
51, 4 (CCL 111, 304): … *quod non praevalet sacerdos efficere per doctrinae sermonem, potestas hoc
imperet per disciplinae terrorem*. This may be a hint that Isidore influenced the wording of
the canon.

ing Suinthila's rule Isidore wrote some of his more critical statements concerning Sisebut.[113] The internal contradictions of the canon may be attributed to its fragmentary condition; however, blatant contradictions cannot be explained that way. Therefore two other explanations suggest themselves: either the text is a reflection of diverging tendencies among the clergy, or the fathers were unable to harmonize church tradition (which is hinted at by the reference to the council of Agde) with the policies of the recent past and their consequences.

It is striking that the decisions of the council were—with the one exception of the canon presently under discussion—not included in the *Hispana*. This could be due to the unjust and illegal deposition of a bishop by the participants, who may have wanted to cover up this distressing act by eradicating its memory and not preserving the acts.[114] However, one has to ask the question why the very positive assessment of Sisebut contained in the one extant canon was not obliterated from the historical record, too; this might have been expected in the light of Isidore's later works, namely the *History of the Goths* and the *sententiae*, and also from the perspective of the 4th council of Toledo discussed below. It is striking and inexplicable why of all canons the canon dealing with the Jews was not forgotten. It is unclear whether this was in accordance with Isidore's intentions; the preservation of the canon may have been due rather to the legal particulars contained in it, but not to the assessment of the late king. It is also possible that the exclusion of this canon from the main collection of Visigothic canon law was due to Isidore's critical assessment of the contents of the acts of this council.

The attitude towards the Jews expressed in canon 57 of the 4th council of Toledo, which met in 633 also under Isidore's presidency, is in marked contrast to the Sevillian canon of the 620s.[115] This is the only instance where Visigothic bishops criticized anti-Jewish measures taken by a king.[116] Remarkable is the stress put on the exercise of free will,

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[113] Séjourné, *Saint Isidore de Séville. Le dernier père de l'église*, Paris 1929, 253.

[114] Stocking, "Martianus, Aventius and Isidore: Provincial Councils in Seventh-Century Spain", *EME* 6 (1997), 172f.

[115] *De Iudaeis autem hoc praecepit sancta synodus, nemini deinceps ad credendum vim inferre. Cui enim vult Deus miseretur et quem vult indurat* (Rom. 9, 18). *Non enim tales inviti salvandi sunt, sed volentes, ut integra sit forma iustitiae. Sicut enim homo proprii arbitrii voluntate serpenti oboediens periit, sic vocante gratia Dei propriae mentis conversione homo quisque credendo salvatur. Ergo non vi sed libera arbitrii facultate ut convertantur suadendi sunt, non potius impellendi* (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 235).

[116] Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, Oxford 1969, 167 and 192.

which is presented as the basis for the effectiveness of God's grace and justice. Conversion is conceptualized as a mental act, as a voluntary answer of man to the grace of God calling upon him.[117] In keeping with the great importance attached to free will, the council modified Sisebut's legislation concerning the baptism of Jewish spouses of Christians. While Sisebut had decreed permanent exile in case a Jewish spouse refused baptism, the conciliar legislation of 633 ordered the separation of the partners, but not exile.[118] The difference is only a gradual one, but a trend towards a less severe attitude can be recognized.

However, the council also decreed that all those Jews who had already been baptized should remain in the church because they had accepted faith, which obliged them to fidelity and obedience towards Christ. The use of force, although deplorable, is said not to change the matter.[119] This "sacramental realism"[120] corresponds to Isidore's view that baptism permanently changes the inner nature of man.[121] Also according to Visigothic liturgy the reception of baptism constitutes the Christian nature of a person.[122] When seen from this perspective,

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[117] For parallels in positions of Augustine and Isidore cf. *infra*, p. 242 f. On a number of points this canon contradicts the Sevillian canon discussed above. In that canon forcefully baptized Jews are referred to as people who did not convert internally, being called to faith by royal authority only (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 482). A second difference between the wording of the Sevillian canon and the Toledan one refers to the question of volition; the former claims that many good things are given to unwilling recipients (*quam multa bona protestantur invitis*; ibid.), but according to the latter the Jews are not to be saved against their own will (*non enim tales inviti salvandi sunt*). In similar words Tertullian had pointed out that gifts offered by people against their own will could not be pleasing to pagan gods (*scap.* II, 2; CCL 2, 1127).

[118] Toledo IV, *c.* 63 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 239); *LV* XII, 2, 14 (MGH, LL, I, 1, 422); cf. Juster, "The Legal Condition of the Jews under the Visigothic Kings", *Israel Law Review* 11 (1976), 569.

[119] *c.* 57 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 236). This regulation was included in high medieval collections of canon law; see Burchard of Worms, *decr.* IV, 82 (PL 140, 742) and the *decretum Gratiani* (*CIC* I *d.* 45, *c.* 5; ed. Friedberg, I, 161 f.). Thomas Aquinas reaches a similar conclusion (*Summa Theologiae* II–II 10, 8; ed. Ottaviensis, III, 1462a).

[120] Orlandis, "Hacia una mejor comprensión del problema judío en el reino visigodo católico de España", *Gli ebrei nell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 26 (1980), 162 and id., *Die Synoden auf der Iberischen Halbinsel bis zum Einbruch des Islam*, Paderborn *et al.* 1981, 165.

[121] *etym.* VI, 19, 43. For the notion of existential change see also Ild. Tol. *cogn. bapt.* 26 (Campos Ruiz, 264).

[122] … *factus impresso crucis tue signaculo christianus* (*Oratio super convertente Iudeo*: *Liber Ordinum*, ed. Férotin, 107, 10). During the blessing of the newly baptized person on

Isidore's statement in the *Etymologies*, according to which all those who leave the church and fall from faith are Antichrists, can be referred also to baptized Jews wanting to leave their new faith.[123] The severity of the regulation adopted by the fathers of the 4th Toledan council is rooted in the conviction that obligations occurred towards God are irrevocable, which also provides the basis for canon 49 of the same council prohibiting monks to return to secular life after monastic profession or paternal oblation.[124] This principle later influenced the decision taken by the 8th council of Toledo in 653, according to which clerical ordinations received under fear or imposed by force should remain valid because they were conferred by bishops possessing the power to bind and to loosen; in this connection the fathers of the council reiterate the regulation that baptism is irrevocable, even in case of those who internally did not want to receive it.[125]

Already Gregory the Great had decreed that synagogues that had been consecrated as churches even in breach of existing legislation were not to be returned to the Jews; the former proprietors should rather be indemnified; they were only entitled to a restitution of furniture and equipment.[126] This regulation also followed the norm that things consecrated to God had to be regarded as "taboo"; the sacramental character was deemed irrevocable. The principle that consecrated items should not be returned to secular use goes back to pre-Constantinian times.[127] Yet late Roman law still contained a regulation according to which conversions from Judaism to Christianity should not be made out of convenience only; under certain circumstances they could even be annulled.[128] Without discussing the problem of the possible return of baptized Jews to the religion of their fathers the council of Agde (506)

the third day after the administration of the sacrament the priest recites the following prayer: … *confirma in hos famulos tuos vel famulas, quos tuo nomine signasti atque sacro liquore mundasti, tuoque Spiritu pleni existunt, etiam iam tuo corpore et sanguine satiati atque redempti* (ibid. 35, 9–13). The ritual *M* contains an additional sentence, highlighting the decisive change brought about by baptism: *Accipe tibi vestem nuptialem, quam presentes ante tribunal Domini nostri Ihesu Christi in vitam eternam* (ibid., note 1; with the same connotation cf. ritual *A*, ibid.).

[123] *etym.* VIII, 10, 22.

[124] Orlandis, *Die Synoden auf der Iberischen Halbinsel bis zum Einbruch des Islam*, Paderborn *et al.* 1981, 163–166.

[125] Ibid., 212. See also the regulations concerning canonical repentance in *c.* 2 of XII Toledo (681).

[126] *ep.* IX, 38 (CCL 140 A, 597).

[127] Demandt, *Die Spätantike*, Munich 1989, 433 referring to *CJ* VI, 2, 3.

[128] *CTh* XVI, 8, 23 (a law from 416).

made admission to baptism dependent on the condition that aspirants should be known to come with "pure faith" to the baptismal font.[129] In spite of that, the previously mentioned law from the *Codex Theodosianus* about the possible return of baptized Jews to Judaism was not included in the *Breviarium Alarici*, although the collection was compiled nearly at the same time as the council of Agde convened. Paradoxically, the church continued to insist on the sincere faith of Jews about to be baptized, while the possibility of returning to Judaism was no longer guaranteed in contemporary secular legislation. From this perspective, the regulations of the 4th council of Toledo represent the tradition set by the *Breviarium Alarici*, but not that of the council of Agde.

Canon 57 of IV Toledo shows that the fathers of that council, including Isidore, regarded faith not only as referring to an internal attitude, they also considered it as an equivalent of the obligation incurred towards Christ and the church by receiving a Christian sacrament. Baptism was seen as more than a sacrament, it was a legal act constituting a divine right, which had to be safeguarded on all accounts.[130]

Isidore's position on conversion has been illustrated above.[131] It should be recalled that he regards the daily conversion of a Christian as a voluntary act. Every Christian is called upon to convert, which is understood as an active process, indicated by the grammatical category of the medium *genus verbi*.[132] This conversion is brought about and made possible by God's grace.[133] The voluntary aspect corresponds to the importance attached to the conversion of the heart.[134] All that human beings can do is to admonish people on behalf of God to repent and convert; this applies especially to prophets,[135] teachers and bishops,[136] but also to secular rulers, if they carry out a mission

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[129] … *si pura fide venire noscuntur* (c. 34; Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica IV, 135).

[130] … *ut integra sit forma iustitiae* (c. 57; Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 235).

[131] See *supra*, p. 106 ff.

[132] *Nullus negat … cotidie … ad Deum nos debere converti* (sent. I, 22, 4; CCL 111, 74 f.).

[133] … *per gratiam dei ad paenitentiam convertuntur* (eccl. off. II, 17, 8; CCL 113, 82).

[134] *sent.* II, 2, 6 f. (CCL 111, 95). See also *quaest. in Ex.* 55, 4 (PL 83, 316). For an association of *conversio* and *compunctio cordis* cf. *eccl. off.* II, 17, 8 (CCL 113, 82 f.). For the importance of *conversio cordis* in Augustine cf. *bapt.* IV, 22, 29 (CSEL 51, 257): if prevailing conditions make it impossible to administer baptism, *fides* and *conversio cordis* are regarded as sufficient.

[135] *pro.* 51 (PL 83, 168).

[136] *etym.* II, 17, 3 (Marshall, 67); Marshall refers to Aug. *doctr. christ.* IV, 38 (CCL 32, 144).

in accordance with the economy of salvation, the will of God and the doctrine of the church.

In the latter case conversion no longer signifies moral repentance of individual Christians; it denotes rather a second aspect, namely dogmatic conversion, the adoption of another faith or the change of denomination. It is true that conversion can only happen inside a human person also in this case, during a prolonged process. However, it is striking that Isidore understands conversion in these latter cases, especially as described in his *Chronicle*, as a single act, often accompanied by rituals, such as anointment and imposition of hands in the case of the Goths.[137] Yet the latter conversion is not described in detail in the *Chronicle*, which is written in a very succinct style. In a strict sense, these ritual acts are only a symbol of inner conversion, conceptualizing the process by way of ritual representation, yet this exemplification could be misunderstood as referring to conversion as an instantaneous event, which might even be brought about hastily, possibly even under external pressure.[138] This dangerous tendency provided the basis for Isidore's choice of words in the *Etymologies*, where he uses the verb *efficere* to refer to forced baptisms.[139] It should be noted that this verb is also used to describe Constantine's conversion to Christianity.[140] Another example for the conceptualization of conversion as an instantaneous act is the description of Constantine's baptism.[141] The administration of baptism by the bishop, who adhered to Arian doctrine, is taken to be an act of conversion to heresy by the emperor who is previously already called *Christianus*, possibly because of his entry into the order of catechumens. Accordingly, also the forced baptisms decreed by Sisebut are thought of as acts of conversion.[142]

In a previous passage of the *Chronicle* Isidore relates that the Jews of Crete converted to Christianity, allegedly incited by a miracle. The

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[137] See the description by Reccared in his speech delivered at the 3rd council of Toledo (*Regis professio fidei*; Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 64).

[138] For sudden conversion versus a long conversion process see Schmitt, *La conversion d'Hermann le Juif*, Paris 2003, 210, who warns against too clear a distinction between the two alternatives. However, this warning is precisely an indication that misunderstandings were easily possible.

[139] *etym*. V, 39, 42.

[140] *chron*. 330 (CCL 112, 154. 155): (*Constantinus*) *Christianus effectus*.

[141] *Constantinus autem in extremo vitae suae ab Eusebio Nicomediense episcopo baptizatus in Arrianum dogma convertitur (/prolabitur)* (*chron*. 334; CCL 112, 156. 157).

[142] (*Sisebutus*) … *Iudaeos sui regni subditos ad Christi fidem convertit* (*chron*. 416; CCL 112, 204. 205).

devil is said to have appeared to them in the figure of Moses in order
to lead them into disaster with false promises.[143] When interpreting an
earthquake according to the spiritual sense of scripture in the treatise
de natura rerum, Isidore compares it to conversion to faith; interestingly
the conceptualization as a sudden and single act is highlighted as
point of comparison.[144] In all these cases conversion is presented as an
instantaneous event.

   Referring to the eviction of Adam and Eve from paradise by the
angel with the fiery sword, Isidore mentions the possibility of conver-
sion being accomplished with recourse to violence and force or with-
out external pressure.[145] These should not be taken as alternatives, but
rather as complementary factors of conversion when it is conceptu-
alized as a process. According to this notion, God not only converts
human beings by various tribulations, but also through love and instruc-
tion.[146] The latter way is that of preaching.[147]

   It is not external conversion that matters for faith, but the conversion
of the heart.[148] When analyzing all of Isidore's works, it becomes clear
that the term "conscience" appears most often in the *sententiae*.[149] The
importance attached to conscience, repentance and personal respon-
sibility of each and every one leaves no room for force and violence,
at least in theory. An exception is made for the legitimate authority of
kings, whose acts are presented—as indicated above—as being depen-
dent on episcopal instruction and on the law.[150]

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   [143] *chron.* 379 (CCL 112, 180–183).
   [144] *Item terrae commotio hominum terrenorum est ad fidem conversio* (*nat. rer.* 46, 3; Fontaine,
321).
   [145] *quaest. in Gen.* 5, 13 (PL 83, 222). For the exegesis of Gen. 3, 24 in the early
church and in late antique Judaism cf. Alexandre, "L'épée de flamme (*Gen.* 3, 24):
Textes chrétiens et traditions juives", *Hellenica et Judaica. Hommage à Valentin Nikiprowetzky*,
Leuven/Paris 1986, 403–441.
   [146] *quaest. in I Reg.* 19, 3 (PL 83, 406).
   [147] *quaest. in I Reg.* 19, 4 (PL 83, 406).
   [148] *sent.* II, 2, 6 (CCL 111, 95). See also *sent.* II, 31, 8 (CCL 111, 156).
   [149] See the chapters *sent.* II, 26 (*de conscientia*); II, 27 (*de intentione mentis*) and II, 30 (*de
mendacio;* especially II, 30, 9). Yet the term is already used in a presumably early work,
the *synonyma;* cf. *syn.* II, 5f. (PL 83, 846).
   [150] Only with this qualification should one follow García Moreno's assessment: "…
people like Isidore of Seville, with his condemnation of all violence, including that
exercised by the powers of the state, tried to dispel or diminish such risks (sc. of
rebellions and usurpations)." ("Legitimate and Illegitimate Violence in Visigothic Law",
Violence and Society in the Early Medieval West, Woodbridge 1998, 58).

Isidore's position as regards the unchanging validity of baptism and his consent to the principles laid down by the 4th council of Toledo can already be deduced from his expositions in the treatise *de ecclesiasticis officiis*.[151] Baptized people are said to belong to the kingdom of God, which would suffer damage at their apostasy. The hint at the singularity of baptism points into the same direction.[152] In Isidore's view a breach of the baptismal promise made to God and of the ensuing oath of fidelity is tantamount to an act of sacrilege.[153]

It is undeniable that Isidore only dared to voice open criticism of Sisebut's policies after the king's death. This corresponds to a similar attitude of Visigothic church councils every time they wanted to redress anti-Jewish measures of kings; if they chose to do so, this happened always after the rule of the king who had enacted the law in question.[154] Isidore's statement in the *Chronicle* quoted above, his probably earliest pronouncement on this issue, is a neutral one; the probably contemporary exposition of baptism in *de fide catholica* contains no clear hint at any current political crisis involving the Jews. His treatise against the Jews may be regarded as an indirect critical reaction to (some of) Sisebut's early anti-Jewish laws.[155] Isidore's statement in the *History of the Goths* reflects his attitude after Sisebut's death, which may have developed during the latter's lifetime, but which Isidore only dared to make public after the king's demise. This critical tendency is in line with the regulations adopted by and the assessments expressed at the 4th council of Toledo.

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[151] *eccl. off.* II, 21, 3 (CCL 113, 96). He may have been influenced by Augustine's view that baptisms received under imperfect circumstances (*fallaciter*) remain valid; cf. *de bapt. c. donatist.* VII, 53, 102 (CSEL 51, 374); see also González Salinero, *Las conversiones forzosas de los judíos en el reino visigodo*, Rome 2000, 132 note 408.

[152] *eccl. off.* II, 25, 6 (CCL 113, 104).

[153] *sent.* I, 25, 1 (CCL 111, 79).

[154] Letinier, "Le rôle politique des conciles de l'Espagne wisigothique", *RHDFÉ* 75 (1997), 621.

[155] Gil, "Judíos y cristianos en la Hispania del siglo VII", *Hispania Sacra* 30 (1977), 46: "La Iglesia visigoda no quiere oír hablar de conversiones forzosas. Para ello, lo mejor es hacer abstracción de los condicionamientos políticos y presentar una doctrina que no esté sujeta a la moda del momento, que sea valedera para siempre." This very generalizing attitude invites, however, some caution. For a different chronology of Isidore's assessments of Sisebut's anti-Jewish policies see Borst, "Das Bild der Geschichte in der Enzyklopädie Isidors von Sevilla", *DA* 22 (1966), 48 note 43, who sees the very succinct formulation in the *Etymologies* as Isidore's last word on the matter, which he interprets as the author's assent to measures contributing to a christianization of the world, the forced baptisms being a symptom of that process. However, since the *Etymologies* are unfinished and undatable this position cannot be maintained.

If the *Chronicle* is taken as evidence that Isidore regarded the conversion of the Jews during Sisebut's reign as an indication of the increasing power of the Visigothic monarchy, complementarily matched by the decline of the Byzantine empire,[156] this optimistic view soon gave way to a more sober one, reflected in the *History of the Goths*. The treatise *de fide catholica* could be taken to mean that the author "merely" considered the full christianization of Visigothic society to be necessary in order to stabilize the monarchy. Isidore repeatedly expresses the expectation and urgent desire that the Jews should recognize the truth, which implies that there are still Jews who have not accepted Christianity; otherwise the expectation of their eschatological conversion would be meaningless.

A look at the *quaestiones* corroborates this impression. Isidore claims that up to the present there are Jews who convert to Christianity.[157] Yet this seems to be more pious fiction that reality, because subsequently he merely talks of Jews who converted in apostolic times. He rather admits that in the present there are very few Jews who desire baptism.[158] This statement amounts to a (tacit) admission that the forced baptisms failed to achieve the desired result, the conversion of the Jews to Christianity. Conversions of larger groups are not to be expected according to this statement; on the contrary, in order "to fulfill the scriptures" the conversion of just a few Jews in the present would be sufficient. Until the end of the world there will be unconverted Jews, so that the work of salvation will remain incomplete until then.

An analysis of the argument in *de fide catholica* leads to the conclusion that the task of the church (and that of a Christian ruler, which is not discussed in this treatise) is limited to preaching the gospel among the Christian inhabitants of the kingdom. The short statement in the *Chronicle* should be taken as a hint that the author concealed his reservations about Sisebut's anti-Jewish policies. Only after Sisebut's death did he publicize his criticism in the *History of the Goths*.

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[156] Reydellet, "Les intentions idéologiques et politiques dans la chronique d'Isidore de Séville", *MAH* 82 (1970), 397. Isidore describes the advance of the Sassanian empire during Sisebut's reign as follows (*chron.* 413; CCL 112, 202. 203): *Romani fortiter debellati plurimas provincias et ipsam Hierusolimam (/quasdam Orientis partes) amiserunt.*

[157] *De quo genere* (sc. *Iudaeorum*) *etiam hucusque non desunt qui veniant et convertantur* (*quaest. in I Reg.* 2, 6; PL 83, 394). According to Aldama ("Indicaciones sobre la cronología de las obras de S. Isidoro", *Miscellanea Isidoriana*, Rome 1936, 88) the *quaestiones* were written between 624 and 636.

[158] *Neque nunc desunt qui, licet rarissimi, tamen credant, ut impleatur in his quod hic homo Dei locutus est* (*quaest. in I Reg.* 2, 7; PL 83, 394).

According to Albert, Isidore was entirely in favour of the anti-Jewish measures adopted during his lifetime; she takes both theological works such as *de fide catholica* and the canons of church councils as evidence for that hypothesis.[159] She interprets canons 60 and 65 of IV Toledo in such a way that they are taken to be indicative "of Isidore's programme for the progressive elimination of Judaism from Spain. This objective was to be realized through an educational process."[160] It should be noted, however, that the initiative for passing canon 65 is expressly ascribed to King Sisenand, and therefore should not be taken as an indication of Isidore's thinking.[161] In addition, his treatise against the Jews should not be taken as evidence for a possible endorsement of Sisebut's policies or of his alleged programme for the elimination of Judaism from Spain. As indicated above, Isidore's argument was highly unlikely to have served an educational process among Jews (which alone would have served the author's alleged eliminatory purposes); the treatise was rather part of such a process among Christians who had already accepted the basic teachings of the church.

It is striking that Isidore fails to adduce one of the central prooftexts of the Augustinian notion of Jewish witness in *de fide catholica*, namely Ps. 58, 12, which was traditionally interpreted as evidence that their existence in the diaspora allegedly proves their guilt and depravity.[162] This passage might have been adduced as evidence for the progressive deterioration of the legal condition of the Jews in Visigothic Spain.[163] Yet it has to be admitted that at the time this treatise was presumably com-

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[159] Albert, "Isidore of Seville: His Attitude Towards Judaism and His Impact on Early Medieval Canon Law", *JQR* 80 (1990), 213.

[160] Ibid. 214 f. For the question whether canon 60 decreed the separation of all Jewish children from their parents or only of those that had been baptized see Lotter, "'Tod oder Taufe'. Das Problem der Zwangstaufen während des ersten Kreuzzugs", *Juden und Christen zur Zeit der Kreuzzüge*, Sigmaringen 1999, 116 f. According to Lotter the more severe injunction separating all Jewish children from their parents dates only from Carolingian times (council of Meaux-Paris 845/46), but it was this version that was included in the *decretum Gratiani*.

[161] Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 240 f.

[162] This verse is, however, interpreted *quaest. in Gen.* 6, 16 (PL 83, 226). For other striking omissions as regards biblical prooftexts see *supra*, p. 63 f.

[163] For the effectiveness of this Augustinian notion in the Spanish high middle ages see the legal code of Alphonse X. of Castile : *E la razon por que la eglesia e los emperadores e los reyes e los otros principes sofrieron a los judios beuir entre los cristianos es esta: por que ellos biuiessen como en catiuerio pora siempre e fuesse remembrança a los omnes que ellos uienen del linaje daquellos que crucificaron a Nuestro Sennor Jhesu Christo* (*Siete Partidas* VII, 24, 1; Carpenter, 28). By contrast Visigothic laws never take recourse to the theory of Jewish witness.

posed that deterioration had hardly begun; until 654 the Jews retained their status as Roman citizens at least in theory. The forced baptisms initiated by Sisebut aimed at the annihilation of Jewish identity, not at a preservation of their existence as Jews, not even in a menial position for the benefit of Christians. In view of the royal policies, a reference to the Augustinian theory could have helped to underpin Isidore's view that a preservation of the Jews until the end of times was in accordance with the economy of salvation. The minor place he accords to the theory of Jewish witness[164] is all the more surprising as it contradicts the fact that many of Isidore's works are visibly influenced by current interests and affairs.[165] This contradiction is probably due to his reluctance to voice open criticism of the ruling monarch. Isidore cannot have approved of the forced baptisms, which can be shown by his explicit reference to the eschatological conversion of the Jews, but he failed to adduce all the authority of Augustine and of patristic tradition to oppose them.[166] He only dared to be more explicit after Sisebut's death. However, he failed to provide a second version of his anti-Jewish treatise that would have expressed his opinion on current Jewish policies more clearly.

Isidore's inclination to comply with ruling monarchs is also visible in his attitude to King Suinthila. In his *History of the Goths*, written during the latter's reign, he initially extolled him as an embodiment of ideal Christian rulership, but after his deposition he branded the same king

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[164] Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law*, Berkeley *et al.* 1999, 97 with note 8 and 121.

[165] Reydellet, *La Royauté dans la littérature latine de Sidoine Apollinaire à Isidore de Séville*, Rome 1981, 509: "... toute l'œuvre historique et politique d'Isidore apparait dictée par les conditions du moment." On Isidore's concern with the political history of the sixth world age see Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law*, Berkeley *et al.* 1999, 110. Even if *de fide catholica* is much more an exegetical and dogmatic treatise, its close relationship to current affairs is undeniable, given the fact that it was probably written under Sisebut's reign, after the first anti-Jewish laws had been enacted. By contrast the *quaestiones* have a much more "antiquarian" character, which is e.g. indicated by Isidore's insistence on the prohibition to eat sacrificial meat (*quaest. in Lev.* 9, 12; PL 83, 327).

[166] This unclear attitude may have something to do with the ambivalent Christian position towards missionary activities among Jews, as described by Berger: "... their (sc. the Jews') conversion at the end of days was required by biblical prophecy. At the same time, no one doubted that the acceptance of Christianity by individual Jews was devoutly to be wished. Thus, at its core, the fundamental theory governing Jewish status in early medieval Europe was marked by tension and ambivalence—a result of the contradiction between the theoretical goals of a universal Christian mission and an argument for toleration that came close to discouraging Jewish conversion." ("Mission to the Jews and Jewish-Christian Contacts in the Polemical Literature of the High Middle Ages", *AHR* 91, 1986, 576).

as a tyrant.[167] Although he criticized usurpations, he tolerated the illegal accession of Sisenand to the throne. At most he was prepared to voice veiled, indirect criticism, thus contradicting his own maxim as laid down in the *sententiae*.[168] Already in the *synonyma*, one of his probably earliest works, he had established the right to political opposition.[169] Since these statements extend to cases when people fail to put up necessary resistance, they could easily be applied to Isidore's own initial reluctance to condemn Sisebut's policies explicitly.[170] If Cazier's dating of the *sententiae* is correct, Isidore's critical words on behalf of those who fail to live up to the requirements of their "teaching office" were formulated towards the end of his life; in this case he may have relied on personal experience from Sisebut's reign, when he failed to criticize policies whose failure had become apparent by the 630s. It is possible that he felt himself to be incapable to contradict rulers, because his maxim in the *sententiae* ends with the admission that it is a gift of God not to suffer from fear (*non timere Dei donum est*). If Isidore's silence is, however, not due to fear but an outcome of his personal relations with the king, he would be a proper addressee of the criticism he directs at a number of his fellow bishops, deploring their reluctance to argue with rulers out of fear to lose their friendship and to turn into the object of royal hatred.[171]

The only veiled criticism of Sisebut voiced in *de fide catholica* is also due to the character of the treatise; it is neither a letter nor a sermon but a dogmatic and hermeneutic work dedicated to his sister. Only very few letters and no sermon of Isidore's have been preserved, and Braulio's catalogue of works does not give any more information. It is an open question whether Isidore made statements about Jews and Judaism also in letters and sermons. With the exception of the canon of the 3rd council of Seville there is no indication that he intervened in problems touching upon everyday contacts of Christians with Jews, as Gregory the Great had done.

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[167] See *hist*. 64 (Rodríguez Alonso, 278; Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 107) and the canons of IV Toledo condemning the deposed king.

[168] *Quibus docendi forma commissa est, multum subeunt periculi si contradicentibus veritati resistere noluerint* (*sent*. III, 45, 1; CCL 111, 288).

[169] *syn*. II, 75 (PL 83, 862).

[170] *Non solum factores, sed etiam conscii peccati tenentur obnoxii, nec enim est immunis a scelere, qui ut fieret obedivit. Similis est qui obtemperat in malo ei qui agit malum, facientem et obsequentem par poena constringit* (ibid.).

[171] *sent*. III, 45, 3 (CCL 111, 289).

The preceding analysis showed that Isidore was very critical of Sise-but's forced baptisms after the event; this conclusion can be drawn first of all from his *History of the Goths*. Non-historiographical works such as the *sententiae* give only indirect hints, but his insistence on the necessity that rulers must subordinate themselves to the guidance of the church can be taken as evidence that he must have viewed Sisebut's policies in ecclesiastical and theological matters with a critical eye. The analysis of works probably written under Sisebut's reign produces a less clear result, but his reiteration in *de fide catholica* of the traditional view that the baptism of the Jews will only happen at the end of times is a clear indication that he must have regarded forced baptisms as a departure from ancient tradition. Yet he did not dare to voice open criticism; it is possible that he was initially unaware of the magnitude of the problems that would arise out of Sisebut's measures. The fact that he does not discuss the problem of "Judaizing" Christians in *de fide catholica* could be an indication that he did not expect such problems to arise at the time of writing. The positive attitude towards forced baptisms expressed by the fathers of the 3rd council of Seville at the beginning of the 620s, which does not necessarily have to be attributed to Isidore himself, can be taken as a hint that the disastrous long-term effects of Sisebut's poli-cies were not yet fully realized, although the assembled prelates already had to deal with cases of Jewish resistance. Public criticism was only voiced at the 4th council of Toledo, but without improving the situation of baptized Jews.

Shortly after Isidore's death, Spanish Jews again found themselves to be victims of renewed attempts to force them into the church. It is unsure whether he had exerted a mitigating influence in this respect towards the end of his life, but such an attitude would be in line with the conservative tendency of his theological writings. However, unlike Augustine he failed to assign to the Jews a clearly visible, positive and uncontested function within contemporary society.[172] In the final analy-sis this failure contributed to their marginalization and degradation to uprooted outsiders.

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[172] Only a thorough analysis of his writings allows the conclusion that he elabo-rated on the Augustinian theory of Jewish witness. Thus Cohen detects "an Isidorian hermeneutic of integration" that "created a Jew with purpose and power in Christian history" (*Living Letters of the Law*, Berkeley *et al.* 1999, 122). However, with regard to the present "Isidore gave clearer expression to the idea that the Jews detracted from Chris-tian unity, that they did not belong in a properly integrated Christian kingdom." (Ibid.) At least he failed to indicate their respective place unequivocally.

4.2. *The role of force and free will in conversion*

For an analysis of Isidore's position towards forced baptisms of Jews it is essential to take his view on free will into consideration.[173] In his controversy with pagan opponents of Christianity, Tertullian had upheld the principle of religious freedom.[174] Patristic authors had often described faith as an "acceptance on one's own initiative".[175] Theodoric the Great, the Arian king of the Ostrogoths, stressed the principle of religious freedom when communicating with the Jews of Genoa.[176]

In the *sententiae* Isidore describes a rational way to achieve faith by means of examples; force is said to be counterproductive.[177] His position in quite similar to the argument of Gregory the Great in his letter to Virgil of Arles and Theodore of Marseille.[178] Very much like Isidore, who praised Sisebut's zeal in the passage of the *History of the Goths* analyzed above, Gregory principally applauds the intention of Christians who want to baptize Jews.[179] Both authors deplore the

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[173] For a general discussion see Bobzien, "The Inadvertent Conception and Late Birth of the Free-Will Problem", *Phronesis* 43 (1998), 133–175; Wetzel, "Snares of Truth. Augustine on Free Will and Predestination", *Augustine and his Critics*, London/New York 2000, 124–141; Rannikko, *Liberum Arbitrium and Necessitas. A Philosophical Inquiry into Augustine's Conception of the Will*, Helsinki 1997; Den Bok, "Freedom of the Will", *Augustiniana* 44 (1994), 237–270; Craig, *The Problem of Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingents from Aristotle to Suarez*, Leiden 1988; Dihle, *The Theory of Will in Classical Antiquity*, Berkeley/London 1982; Parma, *Pronoia und Providentia. Der Vorsehungsbegriff Plotins und Augustins*, Leiden 1971.

[174] *scap.* II, 2 (CCL 2, 1127).

[175] Clem. Alex. *strom.* II, 8, 4 (GCS Clem. Alex. 2, 117, 8f.); Theod. Cyrrh. *graec. affect.* I, 91 (SC 57, 128); Zen. Veron. *tractat. fid.* I, 1 (CCL 22, 153). In his argument against the Arians, who were able to rely on imperial support, Athanasius of Alexandria declared his intention to proclaim the truth only by way of persuasion and instruction, stating that it could not be spread with the help of swords and soldiers (*hist. Arian.* 33, 3; ed. Opitz II/1, 201).

[176] Cassiod. *var.* II, 27, 2 (CCL 96, 76) and *var.* V, 37, 1–3 (CCL 96, 211). The principle *nec illis sunt neganda beneficia iustitiae, qui adhuc in fide noscuntur errare* is only qualified by a slightly condescending final phrase: *Sed quid, Iudaee, supplicans temporalem quietem quaeris, si aeternam requiem invenire non possis*?

[177] *Fides nequaquam vi extorquetur, sed ratione atque exemplis suadetur. Quibus autem exigitur violenter, perseverare in eis non potest* (*sent.* II, 2, 4; CCL 111, 94). Isidore's words were taken up in a canon formulated a few years after his death by the fathers of the 5th council of Toledo, talking about fidelity (*fides*) of vassals towards their lords: *Exemplis enim ceteri provocantur ad fidem* (Toledo V, *c.* 6; Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 285).

[178] *ep.* I, 45 (CCL 140, 59). See also Gregory's letter to bishop Peter of Terracine (*ep.* I, 34; CCL 140, 42). Isidore takes up this thought *sent.* II, 8, 5 (CCL 111, 110).

[179] *ep.* I, 45 (CCL 140, 59, 12ff.).

lack of theological knowledge in those who initiate forced baptisms; Isidore criticizes Sisebut's lack of *scientia*, while Gregory maintains that the instigators of forced conversions cannot be sure of their reward (*merces*); such baptisms may turn out to be ineffective, and in that case the souls of the baptized may indeed suffer serious damage.[180] Isidore fails to indicate the danger suffered by the victims of forced baptisms or the possibility that the perpetrators might not get the desired reward. Unlike Gregory, he avoids a clear and unmistakable judgement on forced baptisms; his remarks remain contradictory. He criticizes the use of force and insufficient theological knowledge shown by the instigator, but not the result and effect of such baptisms. By contrast, Gregory leaves no doubt that such measures are improper and undesirable; his thinking is much more marked by pastoral concerns.

In keeping with his rejection of forced baptisms Gregory insists on the importance of free will for conversion.[181] He mentions the zeal of those who occupied the synagogue of Cagliari, very much like Isidore who admitted that Sisebut's actions were due to the king's *aemulatio*; but none of the two bishops thinks that such violent acts are praiseworthy. Isidore complains of the lack of *scientia* in Sisebut, and Gregory points out that the occupants of the synagogue have to be admonished so that they may know (*scire debent*) what has to be borne in mind according to church doctrine and biblical testimony when converting non-Christians. On the other hand, Gregory advocates the use of force against Christian slaves who observe pagan customs if they refuse to abstain from such practices.[182] Yet he is more hesitant when interpreting Luke 14, 23 (*compelle intrare*).[183] His greater caution on this point—compared to Augustine—may be due to the fact that he refers the passage not to baptized schismatics, but to Jews and pagans.

Augustine's theory of Jewish witness implies their right to existence, which principally excludes all attempts to convert them by force. Therefore, Augustine favoured mission by convincing argument and persuasion, i.e. by preaching,[184] but he does not seem to have been very sure of

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[180] *ep.* I, 45 (CCL 140, 59, 15 ff.).

[181] … *non ut ducantur inviti* (*ep.* IX, 196; CCL 140 A, 751).

[182] *ep.* IX, 205 (CCL 140 A, 764).

[183] *hom. in Ev.* 36, 8–10 (CCL 141, 339–342). On Augustine's interpretation see *infra*, p. 260.

[184] *Nos tamen ubi possumus cum eorum dilectione praedicemus* (*adv. Iud.* X; PL 42, 64). The heading of the chapter is *qua charitate invitandi Iudaei ad fidem*.

this approach.[185] Since human beings are said to be incapable of over-coming the resistance put up by Jews, only God himself is in a position to convert them to Christianity, but significantly without using force.[186] Augustine conceptualizes conversion as an interior process directed by God, without human participation.[187] Human involvement is limited to exegesis, which appears to be the preparation of the conversion initi-ated and brought about by God.

The case of Paul was, however, slightly different. He was converted by force on his way to Damascus, but it is remarkable that this force is presented by Augustine as being directly exerted by God, without human intermediaries.[188] God himself hit Paul, effecting his conversion through his grace without human intervention.[189] Yet elsewhere Augus-tine presents Paul's conversion as being mediated by man.[190] It is possi-ble that he limits human participation to the second part of the conver-sion process, the lifting up of fallen man, but Augustine does not say so explicitly. Yet it is clear that he tries to present the ecclesiastical author-ities, the pillars of order, as executors of God's will, thus safeguarding the primacy of ecclesiastical teaching and tradition. This last point is taken up in Isidore's *sententiae*.[191]

Augustine opposed the use of force against non-Christians, at least as far as "positive" mission, i.e. christianization proper, the propagation

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[185] *Convincimus plerumque Iudaeos de scripturis dei, sed … nolunt intrare* (*de duobus filiis ex Evangelio*; ed. Morin, Miscellanea Agostiniana, Rome 1930, 261, 33–35).

[186] *Pater ergo egreditur, et rogat filium: hoc est trahere; maiorem vim adhibet rogando superior, quam iubendo* (ibid. 262, 5f.).

[187] *Tunc ergo cum vincitur de scripturis, et non inveniunt quid respondeant, irascuntur, resistunt … Postea relinquis illum cum cogitatione sua, et incipit interius loqui deus* (ibid. 262, 9–12).

[188] *Sed a Christo coactum ostendimus Paulum* (*ep.* 185, 23; CSEL 57, 22). See also the following passage: *… Paulum ad cognoscendam et tenendam veritatem magna violentia Christi cogentis esse compulsum* (*ep.* 93, 5; CSEL 34/2, 449f.).

[189] *s.* 299, 6 (PL 38, 1371).

[190] *Unum Saulum, postea Paulum, et prostravit et erexit … Fecit enim hoc per fideles suos, per christianos suos, per potestates a se ordinatas et Christi iugo iam subditas* (*s.* 24, 7; CCL 41, 333).

[191] For Paul's conversion see also Schreiner, "*Tolerantia*. Begriffs- und wirkungsge-schichtliche Studien zur Toleranzauffassung des Kirchenvaters Augustinus", *Toleranz im Mittelalter*, Sigmaringen 1998, 368 and id., "'Duldsamkeit' (*tolerantia*) oder 'Schrecken' (*terror*). Reaktionsformen auf Abweichungen von der religiösen Norm", *Religiöse Devianz*, Frankfurt/M. 1990, 173. For Augustine *tolerantia* was the normal way of building up a Christian community, *terror* being an exception (ibid., 162). Yet he never used the words *tolerantia* or *tolerare* to refer to the Christian relationship with Jews and pagans, only to that with heretics or schismatics; cf. ibid., 166.

of faith, is concerned.[192] By contrast, he was in favour of coercive measures to suppress pagan cults, i.e. he did not reject the use of force in "negative" mission, being aimed at depaganization.[193] In his later works he even advocated the use of force to exert pressure on schismatics in order to overcome the "power of custom" (*vis consuetudinis*).[194] He interpreted external pressure as a sign that pointed to the inevitability and necessity of salvation.[195] According to Augustine's later view, force is the precondition for a subsequent voluntary option of the individual for the good; therefore it is not interpreted as intimidation.[196] For the later Augustine the use of force does not deprive the victim of the opportunity to take a free decision on his own initiative.[197] Statements such as *de fide, hoc est, de voluntate credentis* have to be nuanced and interpreted in the light of his later pronouncements,[198] at least when analyzing the reception of his thought by later tradition. Yet for proper, inner conversion Augustine regards divine grace as essential, so that in the final analysis God is the main agent in bringing about conversions.[199]

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[192] Kahl, "Die ersten Jahrhunderte des missionsgeschichtlichen Mittelalters", *Die Kirche des früheren Mittelalters*, Munich 1978, 71.

[193] Ibid. 41. For Augustine's struggle against the Manichees cf. Weiss, "La méthode polémique d'Augustin dans le *Contra Faustum*", *Inventer l'Hérésie? Discours polémiques et pouvoirs avant l'Inquisition*, Nice 1998, 15–38. See also Brown, "St Augustine's Attitude to Religious Coercion", *Religion and Society in the Age of Saint Augustine*, London 1972, 260–278.

[194] *Foris inveniatur necessitas, nascitur intus voluntas* (*s.* 112, 8; PL 38, 647f.); this phrase concludes a sermon on the parable of the meal, immediately following the well known quotation from Luke 14, 23: *Coge … intrare*. Augustine describes the change of his attitude to religious coercion *ep.* 93, 17 (CSEL 34/2, 461f.). Force is presented first of all as a means to overcome entrenched bad habits.

[195] "The Church … had the duty to exercise religious coercion. … God's inward work of conversion could be effected not only by the Word but by external signs produced by human agents." (Russell, "Augustine. Conversion by the Book", *Varieties of Religious Conversion in the Middle Ages*, Gainesville *et al.* 1997, 27).

[196] Schreiner, "'Duldsamkeit' (*tolerantia*) oder 'Schrecken' (*terror*). Reaktionsformen auf Abweichungen von der religiösen Norm", *Religiöse Devianz*, Frankfurt/M. 1990, 173 and 183f. For the high medieval distinction between unconditional and conditional force, which was canonized in 1234 in the *Liber Extra*, cf. Lotter, "'Tod oder Taufe'. Das Problem der Zwangstaufen während des ersten Kreuzzugs", *Juden und Christen zur Zeit der Kreuzzüge*, Sigmaringen 1999, 118f.

[197] Brown, "St Augustine's Attitude to Religious Coercion", *Religion and Society in the Age of Saint Augustine*, London 1972, 270: "In this thought, the final, spontaneous act of the will could be preceded by a long process—of *eruditio* and *admonitio*—in which elements of fear, of const(r)aint, of external inconvenience are never, at any time, excluded."

[198] *grat. lib. arbitr.* XIV, 28 (PL 44, 897).

[199] … *ut eos deus convertat ad fidem* (*ep.* 217, 2; CSEL 57, 404). See also Wetzel, "Snares

Augustine's earlier view[200] was in line with ancient church tradition.[201] His diverging later position was only possible after Christianity had become the official religion of the empire. He tried to reconcile the two approaches in contradictory statements,[202] comparing imperial laws against pagans with a *paedagogus*.[203] Augustine recommended to start off by trying to convince dissenters by intellectual argument, but in case of failure he advocated the use of force in his later works, justifying this by pointing to the imperfect condition of this world.[204] It is important to note that he did not develop a coherent doctrine on the use of force because he always reacted to specific problems of the day.

From his later perspective, pressure brought to bear on heretics could appear to be beneficial.[205] According to a view that developed in late antiquity and which gained further ground in the middle ages, different degrees of the use of free will were thought possible, without compromising the basic principle that faith had to be voluntary. The use of pressure and intimidation was deemed acceptable as long as the very last and decisive step appeared to be "voluntary".[206] In this sense

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of Truth. Augustine on Free Will and Predestination", *Augustine and his Critics*, London/New York 2000, 124–141.

[200] *s.* 15, 6 (CCL 41, 197): *Foris tolera haereticum, tolera Iudaeum, tolera paganum. Tolera et intus malum christianum.* Concerning applicants for baptism he explained: *Fides enim non res est saltantis corporis, sed credentis animi* (*cat. rud.* V, 9; CCL 46, 129).

[201] Tert. *apol.* 24, 6 (CCL 1, 134): *Nemo se ab invito coli volet, ne homo quidem*; similar is *Scap.* II, 2 (CCL 2, 1127). Lactantius stressed the importance of inner conversion and of assenting human will (*inst.* V, 19, 11–13; SC 204, 232); cf. the translation by A. Bowen and P. Garnsey, *Lactantius: Divine Institutes* (TTH 40), Liverpool 2003, 320. In the 4th century Hilary of Poitiers still required bishops to oppose forced conversions because the God of the universe does not need enforced confessions (*Oratio synodi Sardicensis ad Constantium imperatorem, textus narrativus S. Hilarii*: CSEL 65, 185).

[202] *c. litt. Pet.* II, 83, 184 (CSEL 52, 112). For the use of force in religious matters in Roman imperial legislation see *CTh* XVI, 5, 52 (a law from 412); similar is *CTh* XVI, 5, 54 (from 414). This was largely motivated by the fact that Donatists and Circumcellions showed a marked inclication to suffer martyrdom; cf. Brown, "Religious Coercion in the Later Roman Empire: The Case of North Africa", *Religion and Society in the Age of Saint Augustine*, London 1972, 309.

[203] *s.* 62, 18 (PL 38, 423).

[204] Brown, "St Augustine's Attitude to Religious Coercion", *Religion and Society in the Age of Saint Augustine*, London 1972, 273. For the relationship between coercion, love and free will see Russell, "Augustine. Conversion by the Book", *Varieties of Religious Conversion in the Middle Ages*, Gainesville *et al.* 1997, 26f.

[205] *ep.* 185, 26 (CSEL 57, 25).

[206] For the relationship of force and intimidation cf. Kahl, "Die ersten Jahrhunderte des missionsgeschichtlichen Mittelalters", *Die Kirche des früheren Mittelalters*, Munich 1978, 42–45.

Augustine regarded laws as beneficial factors in the conversion process, as long as their application remained in line with the overriding principle of charity and moderation (*mansuetudo christiana*). From that perspective, public pressure does not exclude the use of free will.[207] Augustine hoped that those put under pressure would subsequently develop interior assent[208] because God was thought to be able to bring about such a conversion at any time.[209]

Perhaps involuntarily, Augustine prepared the ground for an extension of the application of force to the sphere of non-Christians, even though he repeatedly insisted that Paul's conversion had been achieved by God alone.[210] He justified the use of force out of charity, the principal Christian virtue.[211] In a letter to the Donatist priest Donatus he presented coercion as an act of love towards those who are kept in the realm of evil.[212]

The scholastic differentiation between *sacramentum tantum*, *sacramentum et res* and *res tantum* was not available to patristic theology.[213] Yet Augustine prepared the ground for this scholastic theory by conceptualizing the sacrament as a combination of word and matter.[214] Although Christ is said to be the agent in administering the sacraments, their effect is thought to depend on the interior disposition of the recipient.[215] Augustine makes a difference between valid administration and salutary effect of the sacrament.[216] In the context of the Donatist controversy he developed a theory according to which baptism remains valid even though the effect (*virtus sacramenti*) cannot come about without Catholic faith. This lasting *character* of baptism is taken as a justification for action against dissenters, who are said to belong rightfully to the church because they are baptized; the use of coercion against

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[207] *c. litt. Pet.* II, 84, 186 (CSEL 52, 115). See also van Bavel, "Correctio/corrigere", *Augustinus-Lexikon* 2 (1996), 22–27.

[208] *Qui compellitur, quo non vult, cogitur, sed, cum intraverit, iam volens pascitur* (*ep.* 173, 10; CSEL 44, 648).

[209] *c. ep. Pel.* I, 19, 37 (CSEL 60, 454).

[210] *c. ep. Pel.* I, 19, 37 (CSEL 60, 453f.).

[211] *in ep. Joh. ad Parthos* VII, 8 (PL 35, 2033).

[212] *ep.* 173, 2 (CSEL 44, 641).

[213] Peter Lombard, *sent.* IV, d. 4, c. 2 (Spicilegium Bonaventurianum V, 252), following Jerome, *in Ez.* 16, 4 (CCL 75, 163f.).

[214] *Accedit verbum ad elementum, et fit sacramentum* (*in Joh.* 80, 3; CCL 36, 529).

[215] Russell, "Augustine. Conversion by the Book", *Varieties of Religious Conversion in the Middle Ages*, Gainesville *et al.* 1997, 26.

[216] *ep.* 98, 5 (CSEL 34/2, 526f.).

such baptized Christians is thought admissible.[217] Isidore takes up this notion of the lasting *character baptismi* when he declares that disregard of rightfully administered baptism is tantamount to an act of sacrilege.[218]

Augustine did not attribute his own conversion to external pressure; it was rather due to the impression made on him by Catholic doctrine, especially as explained by Ambrose of Milan, backed by the authority of the Catholic church.[219] The term *auctoritas* used in this context refers to the sphere of personal relations between patron and client; external pressure would have disturbed that field; authority is rather due to prestige. God himself is said to have initiated Augustine's conversion.[220]

When developing his doctrine of grace, Augustine redefined the parameters of faith. Formerly he had stressed the free decision of the faithful, the voluntary aspect,[221] but this was later gradually replaced by another concept: faith was thought to be the answer of man to a call received from God (*vocatio*), whose free and sovereign grace was accorded increasing importance when Augustine reinterpreted Paul's letter to the Romans.[222] An important agent in transmitting that *vocatio* is the authority of the Catholic church, which rests on the trustworthiness of its testimony and its witnesses and on its worldwide expansion, which is interpreted by Augustine as a fulfillment of prophecy. The

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[217] *ep.* 173, 3 (CSEL 44, 642).

[218] *eccl. off.* II, 25, 10 (CCL 113, 106).

[219] *Ego vero evangelio non crederem, nisi me catholicae ecclesiae conmoveret auctoritas* (*c. ep. Fund.* 5; CSEL 25/1, 197). See also *ver. rel.* 24, 45 (CCL 32, 215): *Ratio ad intellectum cognitionemque perducit.*

[220] *Convertisti enim me ad te* (*conf.* VIII, 12, 30; CCL 27, 132). One of the three topics of Augustine's confessions is "God's initiation of the conversion process" (Russell, "Augustine. Conversion by the Book", *Varieties of Religious Conversion in the Middle Ages*, Gainesville *et al.* 1997, 15). Conversion can also be set off by fear of God without human intervention; such existential fear can be deliberately instrumentalized by teachers in order to achieve salutary effects (*cat. rud.* V, 9; CCL 46, 129). For Augustine's understanding of conversion in the context of his own biography see Madec, "Conuersio", *Augustinus-Lexikon* 1 (1994), 1282–1294. For the confessions see now Chadwick, "Self-justification in Augustine's Confessions", *The English Historical Review* 118 (2003), 1161–1175.

[221] In his treatise *de catechizandis rudibus* Augustine criticizes superficial Christians who only have themselves baptized because of wordly privileges; to combat that attitude he presents faith as an act of the interior man, of the soul; cf. *cat. rud.* XVI (CCL 46, 149ff.).

[222] *spir. et litt.* 34, 60 (CSEL 60, 220). See also *expos. ad Rom.* 52 (60), 11. 15; 53 (61), 7 (CSEL 84, 34ff.).

aspect of calling precludes external pressure, because it would incapaci-
tate man, depriving him of the option to answer that call on his own
initiative.[223]

In this connection it is important to make a difference between fear
of God (*timor*), which exists without external influence, denoting sim-
ply an interior attitude,[224] and *terror*, which is set off by external pres-
sure (*vis*). This is illustrated by Augustine's description of an incident in
Constantinople. God is said to have passed a severe verdict on that city,
wanting to punish its inhabitants. The inhabitants succeeded in avert-
ing his wrath by repentance, and consequently many citizens decided
to accept baptism immediately. According to Augustine, God exercised
terror in order to bring the citizens back to the right path.[225] It is impor-
tant to note that it is God alone who spreads terror in this case; he does
not rely on human intermediaries, the only means he uses to create
terror is nature.

Augustine never advocated the use of force against pagans or Jews,
restricting its applicability to those whom he considered to be subject
to the authority of the church because they were Christ's property
since baptism, in his case mainly Donatists.[226] However, his argument
that it was principally possible to achieve something good by force and
coercion could easily be transferred to measures against Jews.[227] The
great majority of sources from late antiquity and the early middle ages
reject the use of force in religious matters; in that period no theologian
ever justified forced baptisms. Leo the Great, for instance, displayed an
"irenic" attitude,[228] inviting Jews to convert without advocating the use

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[223] Brown, "St Augustine's Attitude to Religious Coercion", *Religion and Society in the
Age of Saint Augustine*, London 1972, 270f.

[224] Paul requires the faithful Phil. 2, 12 to accomplish their salvation through fear;
however, he does not mention external pressure or mediation.

[225] *sermo de excidio urbis Romae* VI, 7 (CCL 46, 258). External pressure, understood
as a means of education and correction, can foster the inner process of healing and
improvement (*doctr. christ.* IV, 4, 6; CCL 32, 119f.). For Augustine's "pédagogie de la
crainte" see Lamirande, "Coercitio", *Augustinus-Lexikon* 2 (1996), 1043. See also van
Bavel, "Correptio/corripere", ibid. 35–39 and W. Mundle, "Furcht (Gottes)", *RAC* 8
(1972), 694–698.

[226] *ep.* 185, 23 (CSEL 57, 22).

[227] Schreiner, "'Duldsamkeit' (*tolerantia*) oder 'Schrecken' (*terror*). Reaktionsformen auf
Abweichungen von der religiösen Norm", *Religiöse Devianz*, Frankfurt/M. 1990, 167. On
coercion see González Salinero, *Las conversiones forzosas de los judíos en el reino visigodo*,
Rome 2000, 124–131.

[228] Schreckenberg, *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos-Texte und ihr literarisches und historisches*

of force against them,[229] in contrast to the strategy he recommended against heretics and Manichees.[230]

It is quite possible that Isidore was influenced by Augustine's thought about the salutary effects of terror as shown in the report about the alleged averting of divine wrath in Constantinople. Isidore points out that it is God who instills terror into human beings if they refuse to convert voluntarily.[231] He is not unaware of the fact that external pressure, which he significantly qualifies by the attribute "human", often leads to hypocrisy and simulation. Such feigned faith is of no use before God because inner conversion is lacking.[232] Isidore does realize that terror also has a negative connotation, used by himself to denigrate "the law" as opposed to the gospel.[233] Conversion is not set off by terror, but by fear (*timor*).[234] Isidore's thinking on that point seems to be consistent because he makes a similar statement in the *differentiae*.[235] Only if a per-

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Umfeld (1.-11. Jh.), Frankfurt/M. and Bern 1982, 388; Lauras, "Saint Léon le Grand et les Juifs", *Studia Patristica* 17/1, Oxford *et al.* 1982, 59.

[229] *tract.* 35, 2 (CCL 138, 190).

[230] For high medieval controversies about the admissibility of forced baptisms of Jewish children see Horst/Faes de Mottoni, "Die Zwangstaufe jüdischer Kinder im Urteil scholastischer Theologen", *MThZ* 40 (1989), 173–199 and Schreiner, "*Tolerantia*. Begriffs- und wirkungsgeschichtliche Studien zur Toleranzauffassung des Kirchenvaters Augustinus", *Toleranz im Mittelalter*, Sigmaringen 1998, 379. For the discussion of this problem in late Spanish scholasticism see Horst, "Gewalt und Bekehrung. Zum Problem der Zwangstaufe bei Franz von Vitoria", *Papsttum und Kirchenreform*, Sankt Ottilien 1990, 351–363.

[231] *Multis modis **terret Deus** homines ut vel sero convertantur, atque exinde magis erubescant quod tandiu expectati sunt ut redirent. Nam nunc minis, nunc plagis, nunc revelationibus quosdam concutit, ut qui voluntate converti despiciunt commoti terroribus corrigantur* (*sent.* II, 7, 8; CCL 111, 107; my emphasis); cf. Oroz Reta, "Aspects théologiques de la conversion", *Studia Patristica* 33, Leuven 1997, 190–212, esp. 197f.

[232] *Multi quoque fidem Christi ex corde non amant, sed **humano terrore** eandem per hypocrisin tenere se simulant* (*sent.* II, 2, 13; CCL 111, 96; my emphasis). In that sense fear belongs to the vices, as explained in the chapter *de simulatis virtutibus* (*sent.* II, 35, 3; CCL 111, 162).

[233] *dif.* II, 33, 127 (PL 83, 90). *Terror* is considered to be counterproductive, because it leads to enmity (*etym.* X, 134). Elsewhere Isidore explains that people who are occupied by worldly concerns are unfit for the *militia Christi* because they confuse others by their example (*infideli terrore infirment*: *quaest. in Dtn.* 15, 2; PL 83, 365). *Terror* even belongs to the companions of the Antichrist (*quaest. in Gen.* 31, 39; PL 83, 282), but Christ will also appear *tanquam in terrore nocturno* at the last judgement (*quaest. in Ex.* 18, 2; PL 83, 296); see also the similar wording *fid. cath.* I, 61, 5 (PL 83, 497), which is, however, dependent on the biblical text.

[234] *sent.* II, 8, 3 (CCL 111, 109).

[235] *Porro dilectio Dei a timore inchoat, sed non sub timore perseverat* (*dif.* II, 37, 143; PL 83, 92). Also the permanent conversion required of all Christians at every moment arises out of contrition brought about by fear (*sent.* II, 12, 1; CCL 111, 118). This fear should

son fails to convert in time, fear will bring about repentance at the end
of the world.[236] From Isidore's perspective, God creates terror through
his judgement, but not by human intervention. Only God is the origin
of such terror.[237]

Like Augustine, Isidore reserves the right to spread salutary terror
to God; never does he talk of human beings chosen by God to act
on his behalf in order to enhance or propagate faith. God remains
the sole agent and subject of salvation history.[238] Terror is spread by
heretics,[239] "adversaries" and the devil.[240] It is remarkable that Isidore
never talks of people as executors of punishment and admonitions
imposed by God. Certain individuals are mentioned as persecutors
of just people, but the latter do not put other human beings under
pressure.[241] Rulers are the only exception; they are entitled to spread
legitimate terror.[242] In general, terror only comes directly from God,
if it is not set off by fear of his judgement.[243] Only God's salutary
acts produce terror, as suggested also by Isidore's description of the
earthquake that put an end to the attempt of the emperor Julian to
restore the temple in Jerusalem.[244] By contrast, fear of God (*timor*) is
the inner attitude inciting people to educate themselves.[245] Such fear is

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ideally persist for ever in order to avoid relapsing into sin (*sent.* II, 13, 18; CCL 111, 123).
For overcoming bad habit (*mala consuetudo*, which clearly indicates Augustine's influence)
through pain (*dolor*) and fear (*metus*) cf. *syn.* I, 43–47 (PL 83, 837f.): The free will of the
individual remains intact; terror is set off by divine judgement only, but not by human
action or force.

[236] *sent.* I, 29, 6 (CCL 111, 88).

[237] *Deus quos voluerit percutit* (*sent.* III, 2, 3; CCL 111, 197).

[238] See *quaest. in Dtn.* 22, 2 (PL 83, 370), where afflictions sent by God are referred to
as "external pressure".

[239] *hist.* 50 (Rodríguez Alonso, 256; Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval
Spain*, 101): *Leovigildus … multos quoque terroribus in Arrianam pestilentiam inpulit.*

[240] Also unclean spirits and demons are sources of terror; sinners are entrusted to
them for a certain period of time to be corrected (*ad emendationem*); moreover Isidore
mentions Satan himself. No case of corporal affliction happens without God's consent
(*sent.* III, 5, 36; CCL 111, 214f.).

[241] *sent.* III, 7, 22 (CCL 111, 225).

[242] See *infra*, p. 244.

[243] *syn.* I, 47 (PL 83, 838).

[244] *chron.* 345 (CCL 112, 162–164). In his spiritual interpretation of earthquakes *nat.
rer.* 46, 3 (Fontaine, 321) Isidore understands these natural disasters as pointing to the
conversion of sinners and of "earthly men" to faith, the act of conversion again being
only due to God himself. For a similar explanation of "external disasters" cf. *sent.* II, 7,
9–10 (CCL 111, 107).

[245] *quaest. in Jos.* 10, 5 (PL 83, 376). Fear of God should be a constant element in the
life of every Christian (*quaest. in Num.* 23, 1; PL 83, 351); see also *syn.* II, 26 (PL 83, 851).

not a result of external pressure, it rather springs from a meditation on the punishments inflicted on sinners. Yet the clergy, especially bishops, have been commissioned to care for the faithful; if the latter sin without being admonished to repent, guilt is said to be falling on negligent clerics who would have had the duty to bring *coercitio* to their flock.[246]

For Isidore, ideal conversion springs from inner devotion,[247] without coercion and external pressure. This is said to be the case in most people, but some convert only after suffering afflictions. In his interpretation of the story of the prophet Bileam he admits that under certain circumstances pressure can prepare the ground for conversion.[248] However, such a strategy is not always successful, as indicated by the example of Bileam himself.[249]

When analyzing Isidore's attitude to coercion and free will with regard to the conversion of Jews, it appears that his statements on the spread of terror and fear and on the admissibility of external pressure apply also in this case, although it has to be taken into account that many elements of his exegetical interpretations are determined by the biblical text under discussion. When interpreting the story of Hagar and Ismael in the desert, who are given water by an angel, Isidore maintains that (only) some of "that people" were to convert to Christianity;[250] a conversion of all the Jews is thus not to be expected.[251] The thirsty boy Ismael seeing the water shown by the angel is interpreted as being a type of those Jews who will convert to Christianity.[252] It is signif-

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Hope, one of the cardinal Christian virtues, and fear should constantly complement each other (*quaest. in Dtn.* 10, 3–4; PL 83, 363). Isidore's consistency on this point is illustrated by a parallel passage (*syn.* II, 25; PL 83, 851). This should be compared to Augustine's view of the usefulness of fear (*utilitas timoris*); cf. *ep.* 185, 21 (CSEL 57, 19f.). With regard to interhuman relations Isidore also warns of possible destructive consequences of fear, which can lead to an erosion of fidelity (*fides*: *syn.* II, 76; PL 83, 862).

[246] *quaest. in I Reg.* 1, 9 (PL 83, 393). Style and content of this passage show clear parallels with the *sententiae*.

[247] *Ex sola mentis devotione* (*sent.* II, 7, 9; CCL 111, 107); see also *sent.* II, 7, 4 (CCL 111, 105). In the *sententiae* Isidore maintains that reward for good works is reserved for those who avoid sin because of love of God, but not for those induced merely by fear of punishment (*sent.* II, 21, 1; CCL 111, 137).

[248] *quaest. in Num.* 42, 4 (PL 83, 357).

[249] *quaest. in Num.* 42, 5 (ibid.).

[250] *quaest. in Gen.* 17, 5 (PL 83, 249).

[251] Subsequently this point is emphasized once more: … *quia coelestis regni gloriam consecuturi essent, qui ex eis credidissent in Christum* (*quaest. in Gen.* 17, 6; PL 83, 249).

[252] … *aspicit fontem, hoc pro illis dicit, qui ex Iudaeis ad Christum convertuntur* (*quaest. in Gen.* 17, 5; PL 83, 249).

icant that external pressure is only exerted by the feeling of thirst, not
by force of any kind; conversion is brought about by God himself, who
uses an angel as his intermediary. The latter is subsequently identified
with Elijah, who was traditionally believed to bring about the eschato-
logical conversion of the Jews, which means that human beings have
no part in that conversion according to the divine economy of salva-
tion. However, Isidore does not specify his distinction of "divine" and
"human" terror in this case; since he made even exceptions in the case
of rulers, his views on the conversion of Jews remain slightly unclear,
they could even give rise to misunderstandings.

    As indicated above, Isidore makes a significant qualification to his
statement that God alone is entitled to spread terror: kings and rulers
are empowered by their office, which they have received from God,
to prevent their subjects from evil acts.[253] Although terror is permitted,
even imperative in these cases, it remains bound to God's command-
ments; there is no such thing as absolute rule.[254] A good king must
never deviate from the truth, which is often identified with Christ.[255]
Fear of God and of hell should keep rulers from straying from justice.[256]
In addition, they are bound by the laws; a prince is not absolved from
the laws as in the late antique maxim *princeps legibus solutus*; the rule of
law is emphasized by the fact that Isidore dedicates an entire chapter
to a discussion of this point.[257] Moreover, Isidore insists that measures
taken by rulers must be beneficial for their subjects, they must be suited
for the desired effect.[258] One day rulers will have to render an account
to God.[259] This does not say anything about the attitude rulers have to
adopt towards non-Christian subjects, but it is safe to assume that also
in this case a principal criterion for Isidore is peace and discipline of
the church.

    When this line of thought is applied to Sisebut's policies towards
the Jews, his measures appear in a clearly negative light. The actions
of rulers inside the church are unequivocally bound to the direction

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[253] *sent.* III, 47, 1 (CCL 111, 295).
[254] *sent.* III, 47, 2 (CCL 111, 296).
[255] *sent.* III, 49, 4 (CCL 111, 301).
[256] *sent.* III, 50, 4 (CCL 111, 302).
[257] *sent.* III, 51, 1–3 (CCL 111, 303 f.): *Quod principes legibus teneantur.* Cf. *LV* II, 1, 2
(MGH, LL, I, 1, 46): *Quod tam regia potestas quam populorum universitas legum reverentie sit
subiecta.*
[258] *sent.* III, 48, 5 (CCL 111, 297).
[259] It is not surprising that Isidore criticizes the terror initiated by Leovigild to convert

of the clergy; the king may spread terror only if told to do so by ecclesiastical authorities.[260] It is remarkable that not even this option was chosen by the fathers of the 4th council of Toledo when dealing with "relapsing" Jews. In this case, royal power was not involved in the process of educating and punishing such persons; the conciliar measures were taken after a mere consultation of the king,[261] and the power to correct "relapsing" Jews by coercive measures was confined to the bishops.[262] Possibly influenced by Sisebut's negative example, the fathers of the council did not want any intervention of the king in the policies of the church towards the Jews.

With regard to the complex problem of predestination and free will, Isidore occupies an intermediary position. Relevant statements can mainly be found in the *sententiae* and a presumably early work, the *differentiae*, which already shows the clear influence of Augustine's doctrine on grace.[263] In the *sententiae* Isidore affirms the free will of man, coupled with a theory of divine foreknowledge.[264] Without divine grace (*gratia praeveniente*) man is said to be incapable of anything;[265] this also applies to conversion.[266]

However, there are passages in Isidore's works where he attaches greater importance and scope to free will and human merit. In *de fide catholica* he declares that the Jews do not deserve divine grace, which is an indication that he does not think grace to be entirely free, but to be dependent upon human merit and man's preparing and coop-

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Catholics to Arianism; cf. *hist.* 50 (Rodríguez Alonso, 256; Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 101).

[260] *sent.* III, 51, 4 (CCL 111, 304).

[261] By contrast, according to the wording of some of the other canons dealing with problems related to baptized Jews the initiative lay clearly with the king, but—and precisely this is the point—not in all cases; cf. *cc.* 65 and 66 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 240 f.).

[262] *c.* 59 (ibid. 237). See also *c.* 63 (ibid. 239).

[263] *dif.* II, 32, 117. 119 (PL 83, 88). For Augustine's position on the free will of Jews cf. *in Joh.* 53, 6 (CCL 36, 454 f.).

[264] *sent.* I, 11, 3 (CCL 111, 39). For the foreknowledge of God see also *quaest. in Gen.* 1, 4 (PL 83, 210). For twofold predestination cf. *sent.* II, 6, 1 (CCL 111, 103). However, Isidore denies predestination to sin (*sent.* II, 5, 13; CCL 111, 102 f.). Yet those condemned by their own fault and guilt are thought to be predestined to punishment (*dif.* II, 32, 117 f.; PL 83, 88).

[265] *sent.* II, 5, 4 (CCL 111, 100).

[266] *Nullum quoque suis viribus sed per divinam gratiam capiti Christo subiungi* (*eccl. off.* II, 24, 6; CCL 113, 101).

erating contribution to his own salvation.[267] This thesis contradicts the Augustinian concept and is rather in keeping with a statement by Pelagius; the latter condemned that position when he had to justify himself in Palestine, but Augustine claimed that Pelagius did so only under pressure and contrary to his real conviction.[268] Already in a passage of the *differentiae* Isidore presents human merit or guilt as the criterion for the effectiveness of divine grace.[269] This is, however, contradicted by another passage in the same work, where grace is said to be the free gift of God's mercy.[270]

Within the field described by the sovereign grace of God on the one hand and human will on the other, Isidore tends to attach greater importance to the former.[271] Human will is thought to be brought about and put on the right path by grace.[272] In the final analysis, God and man have to cooperate, but man is clearly put in second place.[273] This applies also to the sphere of intellectual reasoning and reflection.[274] God's help is thought essential especially to achieve something good.[275] Since conversion belongs into that category it must be produced by a cooperation of God and man. Isidore describes the salvation—through conversion—of the malefactor on the cross recounted in the passion narrative as being effected by divine grace.[276] Yet human will is not absent;[277] elsewhere in the same work Isidore even accords primacy

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[267] *Cuius quidem gratiam gentes sumunt, et Iudaei non meruerunt* (*fid. cath.* II, 27, 4; PL 83, 536).

[268] *… quod Pelagius in iudicio Palestino ficto corde damnavit, "gratiam dei secundum merita nostra dari"* (*c. ep. Pel.* I, 19, 37; CSEL 60, 453). For the rejection of Pelagius by Isidore cf. *chron.* 374 (CCL 112, 178. 179).

[269] *dif.* II, 32, 121 (PL 83, 89). Since he highlights divine predestination in the same passage, it would appear that human merit is also predestined by God.

[270] *Divinae misericordiae donum gratuitum* (*dif.* II, 32, 115; PL 83, 87). Following John 6, 44 Augustine had emphasized the importance of God's grace as a precondition of faith; cf. *grat. lib. arbitr.* XIV, 28 (PL 44, 897). Another prooftext from the New Testament suitable to stress the importance of God's cooperation is Phil. 2, 13.

[271] *dif.* II, 32, 115 (PL 83, 87).

[272] *dif.* II, 32, 117 (PL 83, 88).

[273] *Haec enim et dantis Dei et accipientis est hominis* (*sent.* II, 5, 5; CCL 111, 100).

[274] *Doctrina sine adiuvante gratia, quamvis infundatur auribus, ad cor numquam descendit* (*sent.* III, 10, 1; CCL 111, 233).

[275] *dif.* II, 32, 120 (PL 83, 88). For Augustine's view that grace is essential for everything good see Bonner, "Baptismus paruulorum", *Augustinus-Lexikon* 1 (1994), 599.

[276] *… divina gratia in cruce mutatur* (*sent.* II, 5, 5; CCL 111, 100). For conversion being the result of the sudden intervention of God's grace see *sent.* II, 5, 9 (CCL 111, 101).

[277] *sent.* II, 13, 13 (CCL 111, 122).

to the free will of man, which is only supported by the gift of divine grace.[278]

Taking together his various statements on the problem of grace and free will, it appears that in Isidore's view both factors have to cooperate; depending on the context, the relative importance of one or the other side is given more weight, even within one and the same treatise. Sometimes the sphere of human will is very much dominated by divine initiative, but elsewhere—especially when admonishing people to daily repentance—human will is accorded more significance. Isidore's explanations concerning the pastoral work of the church make it clear that force and external pressure cannot produce the desired theological result. The profession of Christian faith has to be voluntary.[279] Precisely on this point Ildefonse of Toledo differs from Isidore, which is contrary to his usual practice.[280] Ildefonse declares that baptism has the effect of producing assent in those who initially refuse to accept Christianity.[281] By contrast, Isidore never maintains that something good can be the result of coercion. Yet he is unable to resolve the tension between grace and free will, which leads to some contradictory statements. But ultimately something good, including conversion, can only come about by a combination of both sides.

In the early middle ages conversions were increasingly attributed to miracles.[282] An example is a prayer from the old Spanish liturgy,

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[278] *sent.* II, 2, 5 (CCL 111, 94).

[279] *Confiteri proprii arbitrii est; nam fateri coacti est animi, non voluntatis* (*dif.* I, 278; Codoñer, 212). The voluntariness of the profession of faith implies that conversion has to be the outcome of one's own initiative, too.

[280] *cogn. bapt.* 100 (Campos Ruiz, 328): … *hic gratia praevenit liberum arbitrium.*

[281] … *hic datur, ut nolentes bene velint* (*cogn. bapt.* 100; Campos Ruiz, 328).

[282] Schmitt, *La conversion d'Hermann le Juif*, Paris 2003, 180f. Compared to Augustine miracles play a greater role for Gregory the Great and Gregory of Tours; cf. Heinzelmann, "Heresy in Books I and II of Gregory of Tours' *Historiae*", *After Rome's Fall. Narrators and Sources of Early Medieval History*, Toronto *et al.* 1998, 80. According to Gregory of Tours Reccared assembled Catholic and Arian bishops before his conversion; only the former were able to perform miracles (*signa*); cf. *hist.* IX, 15 (MGH, SRM, I, 1, 429). Gregory the Great (if he is the author of the *dialogues*) relates the miraculous conversion of a Jew *dial.* III, 7, 3–9 (SC 260, 281–285): The will to convert is exclusively produced by supernatural signs; the Christians, represented by the bishop, merely have to instruct the Jew, who has been prepared by the miracle, which is due to God alone. The bishop remains completely passive, the initiative for conversion rests entirely within the realm of transcendence. For the supernatural as sole agent of the miraculous see Drews, "Miracles in Visigothic Hagiography—Actively Performed or Emergent?", *Studia Patristica. Acts of the 14th International Conference on Patristic Studies Oxford 2003* (in print).

which presents the conversion of a Jew as the result of a wonder.[283]
Throughout the report there are no Christians who would appear as
active participants of the event; the miracle is brought about exclusively
by relics of the martyrs, in whose honour mass is celebrated. Initially
wonders are praised which are bestowed by God on his saints, whereby
he leads the wicked to conversion. A Jew is said to have come to the
tomb of the martyrs out of "impious" curiosity, but he is tied and kept
at the tomb by snakes. The snake seduced man and brought about his
eviction from paradise according to the book of Genesis, but in this
story it leads the Jew to faith, reversing the story of the primordial fall.
Conversion is produced by terror and force (… *terrore revocavit ad gratiam
… quem hic violentia reparavit*). It is significant that God does not use
human agents for that terror; the only intermediary is the snake, which
has turned into the instrument of salvation. The Jew is the antitype
of the old, weak and fallen Adam, who is "restored" to the church
by the miracle; this notion is a reflection of the theory of "primordial
Christianity", from which the Jews have allegedly apostatized.

The miracle story presupposes that the Jew principally knows every-
thing about Christianity; only his stubborn resistance prevents him
from professing publicly what he has known in his heart all along. Con-
sequently, the story does not relate that he receives Christian instruc-
tion; there is no catechumenate of any sort. Under the influence of
supernatural power he confesses Christian faith, which leads directly to
salvation. This story illustrates three things: according to the authors
and transmitters of the prayer, the conversion of the Jew is incumbent
upon God alone, human beings do not intervene in the affair. Second,
no preparation is necessary, because the Jew already possesses every-
thing that is necessary for conversion, a curiosity for the miraculous
and knowledge of the core of Christianity, namely that Jesus is the Lord.
Third, the story shows that a profession of faith extorted by supernatu-
ral force is sufficient to achieve salvation.

The tendency to attribute conversions to miracles is also present in
Isidore, yet it is more a shift of emphasis, because basically he maintains
the principle that conversions are also possible as a result of preaching
(*fidei ratione*). He includes miracles that happen at the tombs of the
martyrs into the "combat of preaching" (*praelium praedicationis*). This
notion rests on the assumption that in every type of preaching, by words

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[283] Férotin, *Le "Liber Mozarabicus Sacramentorum" et les Manuscrits Mozarabes*, Paris 1912,
504f.

or by events, Christ is the principal agent,[284] who is also the ultimate author of the miraculous conversions happening at the tombs.[285]

Gregory the Great had favoured preaching as a means to convert Jews,[286] although he followed Augustine in admitting that the chances of success were rather meagre.[287] Cases of forced baptisms of Jews that occurred during his pontificate seem to have been initiated mainly by over-zealous bishops.[288] By contrast, Isidore was confronted with measures initiated by the king. In spite of Braulio's assertion that he was a gifted preacher, there is no evidence that some of his sermons were addressed to Jews. Like Gregory the Great, Isidore emphasized the importance of free will for conversion; for this reason both of them objected to coercion in this sphere, which was in keeping with church tradition. However, in much the same way as Gregory refused to restore synagogues to the Jews, even if they had illegally been converted into churches, Isidore declined to permit baptized Jews to return to the faith of their fathers.

Whereas Gregory the Great and Augustine favoured preaching, Gregory of Tours put his trust rather in prayer, relying more on God's help than on human efforts. When describing conversions of Arians and Jews to Catholicism, miracles play a greater role in his account than controversies and debates about the content of faith.[289] Gregory admits that his efforts to convert Jews by intellectual argument remained

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[284] *quaest. in Iud.* 5, 12 (PL 83, 385).

[285] *quaest. in Iud.* 5, 13 (PL 83, 385).

[286] Gregory was among the last bishops who preached their own sermons; cf. Evans, "Gregory the Great on Faith and Order", *Gregorio Magno e il suo tempo*, Rome 1991, II, 167. See also Angenendt, *Das Frühmittelalter*, Stuttgart *et al.* ²1995, 247; Schneyer, *Geschichte der katholischen Predigt*, Freiburg 1969, 89–92 and Judic, "Grégoire le Grand, un maître de la parole", *La parole du prédicateur*, Nice 1997, 49–109.

[287] *moral.* XXXV, 14, 24 (CCL 143 B, 1789, following Rom. 11, 25f.).

[288] In his letter to Virgil of Arles and Theodore of Marseille from 591 he repeatedly admonishes the addressees not to neglect preaching (*ep.* I, 45; CCL 140, 59). For the actions of bishop Avitus of Clermont in 576 see Venant. Fortun. *carm.* V, 5 (MGH, AA, IV, 107–112) and Greg. Tur. *hist.* V, 11 (MGH, SRM, I, 1, 205f.). Also King Chilperic I had decreed forced baptisms of Jews in 582; cf. Greg. Tur. *hist.* VI, 17 (MGH, SRM, I, 1, 286): … *multos Iudaeorum eo anno baptizare praecipit.* There are no instances of forced baptisms initiated by rulers during Gregory the Great's pontificate. Already the conversion of the Jews of Minorca in 418 was due to the zeal of the local bishop Severus, who admonished the bishops of the entire *oikoumenē* to follow his example; cf. Bradbury, *Severus of Minorca: Letter on the Conversion of the Jews*, Oxford 1996, 2.

[289] Keely, "Arians and Jews in the *Histories* of Gregory of Tours", *JMH* 23 (1997), 107–111.

futile.[290] His Jewish opponent refused to accept Gregory's "reason".[291] This amounts to an admission that the one method favoured by Isidore, the *provocatio fidei ratione*,[292] did not produce the desired result in almost contemporary cases in Merovingian Gaul.

When analyzing the conceptualization of the relationship of coercion and free will by late antique authors, the letter of Severus of Minorca from 418 provides interesting insights. This "central document in the history of religious coercion in late antiquity"[293] is addressed to the bishops in the entire world. On the one hand, bishop Severus, the instigator of the anti-Jewish measures, praises himself for achieving the conversion of the entire Jewish population, but on the other he tries to eschew responsibility for the use of violence by repeatedly referring to miraculous interventions, which are said to have produced decisive turns in the succession of events leading up to the conversions.[294] Since a public disputation failed to produce the desired outcome, from Severus's perspective only coercion and violence remained viable alternatives; however, according to his palliative report the use of force was decided by heavenly interventions.[295] Nonetheless, Severus asks the addressees of his letter to become active themselves and to follow his example and

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[290] *Haec et alia nobis dicentibus, numquam conpunctus est miser ad credendum* (*hist*. VI, 5; MGH, SRM, I, 1, 271).

[291] *Priscus vero ad cognuscendam veritatem nulla penitus potuit ratione deflecti* (*hist*. VI, 17; MGH, SRM, I, 1, 286). See also Reydellet, "La conversion des juifs de Clermont en 576", *De Tertullien aux Mozarabes*, Paris 1992, I, 371–379.

[292] *hist*. 60 (Rodríguez Alonso, 272); see the detailed analysis *supra*, p. 214ff.

[293] Bradbury, *Severus of Minorca: Letter on the Conversion of the Jews*, Oxford 1996, 2. With regard to the use of force in religious matters there are interesting parallels between the attitude of Severus concerning the Jews and the position adopted by Consentius concerning the Priscillianists on the Iberian peninsula; cf. ibid., 62f. In both cases non-Catholics held influential, even leading public positions, which could only be undermined by force in the opinion of some representatives of Catholic orthodoxy. Like Severus Consentius adopts a positive view of the *zelus fidei*, which can lead even to violent action (*ep*. 11*, 1, 2; within the collection of Augustine's letters CSEL 88, 52). See Lotter, "Die Zwangsbekehrung der Juden von Menorca um 418 im Rahmen der Entwicklung des Judenrechts der Spätantike", *HZ* 242 (1986), 291–326; Ginzburg, "La conversione degli ebrei di Minorca (417–418)", *Quaderni Storici* 79 (1992), 277–289.

[294] Bradbury, *Severus of Minorca: Letter on the Conversion of the Jews*, Oxford 1996, 13: "… as at other critical moments in the narrative, Severus invokes the miraculous. Where human persuasion fails, the power of Christ triumphs." Cf. *ep. Sev*. 19, 2 (Bradbury, 108).

[295] *ep. Sev*. 8, 3 (Bradbury, 86). Allegedly words and miracles are the only ways to achieve conversions; a Jewess who refuses baptism was permitted to leave, *quia ad fidem Christi nec verbis nec miraculis flecteretur* (*ep. Sev*. 26, 2; Bradbury, 120). Yet in reality at least one Jew feared that he might be killed (*ep. Sev*. 19, 4f.; Bradbury, 108).

show their zeal against the Jews.[296] Yet he is unable to explain how he personally contributed to the conversions, attributing the "success" to interventions of the supernatural only.

The predominant impression is that the Minorcan Jews converted mainly because of the massive intimidation orchestrated by their Christian neighbours; this conclusion is supported by the fact that Severus had to discuss with the "new Christians" about their faith after baptism. His correspondent Consentius considered it to be necessary to write a treatise *adversus Iudaeos* for Severus after the baptism of the Minorcan Jews in order to supply the bishop with arguments he might use in his confrontations with the newly baptized Jews,[297] who did not willingly subordinate themselves to episcopal authority, given the fact that they were able to preserve their leading position in local society.[298] The *epistola Severi* shows that the author does not address the theological problem of forced baptisms; he may not even have been aware of it. He was mainly intent on undermining the position of the Jews within the local elite in order to be able to promote his own standing. The miracles related in his letter are merely a literary device meant to cover up the use of force on the part of the Christians.

In 614 the council of Paris dealt with Jews who allegedly occupied or aspired to military or civil positions giving them authority over Christians. The fathers of the council decided that such an attempt should be "punished" by the baptism of the Jew and his entire family.[299] In this case, baptism is not decreed for all Jews, it is rather intended as a canonical punishment for misbehaviour, which is the topic of the canon. The aim was first of all to illustrate the inadmissibility of Jewish authority over Christians.[300] It is doubtful that the clause was ever

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[296] … *zelum Christi adversum Iudaeos sed pro eorumdem perpetua salute suscipite* (*ep. Sev.* 31, 2; Bradbury, 124). This zeal requested by Severus is semantically equivalent to the *aemulatio* that is credited to Sisebut by Isidore in his *History of the Goths*. However, Isidore criticizes excessive zeal in his explanations *de male usis virtutibus* (*sent.* II, 34, 4f.; CCL 111, 160f.). For further references to zeal by Severus cf. *ep. Sev.* 4, 4 (Bradbury, 83f.). Severus even blames the *zelus Christi* directly for instigating the violent actions against the Jews (*ep. Sev.* 13, 6; Bradbury, 92). Also Consentius advocates zeal against heretics, which leads to their extermination; cf. *ep.* 11*, 24, 3 (in Augustine's collection CSEL 88, 68).

[297] Bradbury, *Severus of Minorca: Letter on the Conversion of the Jews*, Oxford 1996, 71f. and Consentius's letter *ep.* 12*, 13, 7 (in Augustine's collection CSEL 88, 78).

[298] *ep. Sev.* 19, 6 (Bradbury, 108).

[299] *c.* 17 (15) (MGH, LL, III, Conc. I, 190). It is unclear whether Sisebut's anti-Jewish policies were known in Merovingian Gaul at that time; cf. Geisel, *Die Juden im Frankenreich*, Frankfurt/M. *et al.* 1998, 207 note 359.

[300] Geisel, *Die Juden im Frankenreich*, Frankfurt/M. *et al.* 1998, 205.

put into practice; it may have remained a piece of drastic propaganda. However, it is remarkable that the administration of baptism was prescribed as a canonical punishment.

We may conclude that Isidore as a rule did not advocate the use of force in matters of religion. He makes an exception for Christian rulers, who have to follow clerical direction in such cases; yet their actions remain limited to the inner-Christian sphere, since the responsibility of the clergy does not transcend it either. Isidore clearly follows Augustine's example, who had only justified coercive measures against Donatists, who were baptized and therefore considered to be members of the church. With regard to such schismatics Augustine conceived the principle *compelle intrare*, which was only rarely invoked by himself; it is significant that Isidore never refers to this Augustinian notion. In general, he only presents God as the sole author of terror in matters of religion and conversion. He is reluctant concerning people who claim to be entitled by God to exert pressure and spread terror. Isidore is in line with other early medieval authors in admitting that miraculous heavenly interventions are likely to effect conversions, yet compared to other contemporary and earlier sources the latter tendency is less prominent in his thinking.

4.3. *"The Jew" as an outsider: the Catholic nation*

It is remarkable that in Isidore's treatise *de fide catholica*, a presentation and apology of the faith considered to be the foundation of the Visigothic kingdom, only Jews are named as outsiders, although precisely the same Catholic faith had been threatened a few decades before by the Arian doctrine propagated by the monarchy of the time.[301] When he interprets Gen. 1, 26 ("Let us make man in our image, after our likeness") he understands the plural as referring to the first two persons of the Trinity.[302] He distinguishes between God and his image, understanding the latter as a reference to Christ.[303] He may want to

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[301] However, he credits his brother Leander with having composed works against the Arians *ostendens scilicet, quid contra eosdem habeat catholica ecclesia vel quantum distet ab eis religione vel fidei sacramentis* (*vir. ill.* XXVIII; Codoñer, 150).

[302] *fid. cath.* I, 3, 4 (PL 83, 455).

[303] *fid. cath.* I, 3, 5 (PL 83, 455). Cf. *etym.* VII, 2, 16: *Homoousion, similis substantiae, quia qualis Deus, talis est et imago eius*, and ibid. 2, 21: *Imago dicitur propter parem similitudinem Patris.* The scriptural basis is Col. 1, 15 (*qui est imago Dei invisibilis*) and 2 Cor. 4, 4.

obviate a possible Arian distinction between God and his (inferior?) image by stressing the unity of both.[304]

During his youth Isidore had been able to see that the Arian church succeeded in making considerable inroads into the Catholic flock in the wake of the Arian synod of 580. A number of Catholics, including a bishop, converted to the Arian denomination.[305] The fact that Isidore does not conduct a theological argument against the faith which until a few decades ago had constituted the main pillar of the identity of the *gens Gothorum*, the bearer of the kingdom, shows that he was not guided by theological viewpoints alone when structuring his argument.[306] On a number of occasions, Isidore does not follow his sources when they point to Arian zeal displayed by the Goths in the past.[307]

Unlike Isidore, the author of the *Vitas Patrum Emeretensium*, probably writing in the 630s, pursues a markedly anti-Arian agenda. It is significant that Isidore appears to give no attention whatsoever to the Arian "problem" of the past, quite unlike his elder brother and predecessor Leander.[308] It is equally striking that King Sisebut was conscious of that problem, trying to convert the Lombard king to Catholicism; in that endeavour he may have relied on the tradition of anti-Arian *quaestiones et responsiones* and perhaps even on the relevant works by Leander. Isidore failed to produce such a work, and as this was considered a flaw he was subsequently credited with having written such a treatise, which actually is a collection of authentic Isidorian passages on the Trinity assembled by an unknown author.

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[304] *Cui **una** imago cum Deo est, et **unicum** nomen divinitatis* (my emphasis). A similar intention may be detected *fid. cath.* I, 3, 6 (PL 83, 456).

[305] "By means of these terrible acts, he forced many into the Arian disease. Others he deceived without persecution (!), enticing them with gold and property" (*hist.* 50; Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 101; Rodríguez Alonso, 256: *Multos quoque terroribus* [sc. *Leuvigildus*] *in Arrianam pestilentiam inpulit, plerosque sine persecutione inlectos auro rebusque decepit*).

[306] Similar is his treatment of the affair of Hermenegild, compared to the presentation of that event by John of Biclaro; Isidore's exposition has "un accent nettement plus politique que religieux" (Fontaine, "Conversion et culture chez les wisigoths d'Espagne", *La conversione al cristianesimo nell'Europa dell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 14, 1967, 118).

[307] Messmer, *Hispania-Idee und Gotenmythos*, Zurich 1960, 120.

[308] Fontaine, "Conversion et culture chez les wisigoths d'Espagne", *La conversione al cristianesimo nell'Europa dell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 14 (1967), 133. On the other hand the *symbola* formulated by different councils of Toledo in the 7th century were motivated by the attempt to uphold Catholic orthodoxy and by the desire to ward off the "tentation arienne d'un 'trithéisme'" (ibid., 138).

From a dogmatic perspective, the confrontation with heretics was quite important, as shown by Isidore himself at the 2nd council of Seville.[309] The tradition of anti-heretical literature was kept alive in 7th-century Spain by several treatises devoted to a discussion of the Trinity.[310] Isidore's *de fide catholica* is directed at a different target; the formerly Arian Goths are included in the Catholic community, and for this reason dogmatic differences between Catholicism and Arianism receive no attention. He blames Gothic Arianism exclusively on the Roman emperor.[311] Presumably, Isidore wants to cover up the differences of the past so as not to destabilize the ruling elite of the new Catholic monarchy. This procedure is in keeping with a model pursued in several late antique and early medieval kingdoms.[312]

In order to stabilize the elite of the Catholic kingdom, Isidore repeatedly emphasized the importance of peace and unity among all Catholics, especially in the *sententiae*.[313] Even though this did not reflect contemporary social reality, he used this notion as a programmatic appeal to the entire Catholic population, especially to its ruling sectors composed of descendants of Hispano-Roman senators and Visigothic nobles. Isidore contributed to the ideological foundation of inner peace by silencing dogmatic controversies of the past, especially and most remarkably in his treatise on Catholic faith. This approach almost

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[309] The literary struggle against heresies had a long tradition on the Iberian peninsula, going right back to the 4th century, when Spanish Catholics fought against Priscillianists. The latter remained active until the 6th century, so that Catholics had to combat Priscillianists and Arians at the same time. Remnants of these heretical movements may have persisted until the 8th century. For Priscillianism see Cardelle de Hartmann, "Ortodoxos y Priscilianistas en la época sueva", *Suevos–Schwaben. Das Königreich der Sueben auf der Iberischen Halbinsel (411–585)*, Tübingen 1998, 81–104; ead., "El priscilianismo tras Prisciliano, ¿un movimiento galaico?", *Habis* 29 (1998), 269–290 and Zeddies, *Religio et sacrilegium*, Frankfurt/M. *et al.* 2003, 83–108 and 140–147.

[310] E.g. *de trinitate opusculum* by Eugenius II of Toledo; cf. Fontaine, "Conversion et culture chez les wisigoths d'Espagne", *La conversione al cristianesimo nell'Europa dell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 14 (1967), 139 f.

[311] *chron.* 349 (CCL 112, 166).

[312] Pohl, "Introduction: Strategies of Distinction", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 6, and also Heather, *The Goths*, Oxford and Cambridge/Mass. 1996, 306: "The body politic needed to include all, or most, of the locally powerful figures within it to create internal unity and frontier security."

[313] *sent.* III, 12, 3 (CCL 111, 234 f.). The ideal of *caritas* had already been put at the end of the sermon preached by Leander on the occasion of the conversion of the Goths: … *pax et caritas facta est, quae omnium virtutum obtinet principatum* (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 158 f.). Almost imploringly Leander describes the newly founded political (and religious) community: *unanimiter unum omnes regnum effecti.*

exactly reflects the attitude adopted by Visigothic Catholic authors with regard to the "martyrdom" of the Catholic rebel Hermenegild, who was not promoted as a champion and forerunner of Visigothic orthodoxy as definded in the 7th century—as might have been expected—but who was on the contrary branded as a rebel, as a negative example threatening the stability of the Gothic monarchy by questioning its contemporary ideological foundations.[314]

Isidore adopts a different approach to heresy in his *quaestiones in Vetus Testamentum*, which is an encyclopaedic compendium of exegesis. In this context Jews are not singled out as the only ideological adversaries of the Catholics; they are included in a catalogue of heretics which consists apart from that of Christian heresies only, including Arians.[315] In the *quaestiones* Arius is mentioned more out of learned interest in the past, in the context of other "archheretics", such as Marcion.[316] In this work, traditionally dated into the final period of Isidore's life, but which is certainly relying on earlier preparation, the author does not seem to be guided by an interest motivated by the political and ideological situation of the 7th century. By contrast, structure and concept of *de fide catholica* are much more determined by criteria of political propriety, adapting traditions of the literature *adversus Iudaeos*.[317]

It should be noted that Isidore never discusses the existence of pagan inhabitants of the kingdom in any of his works, even though such people are attested until the second half of the 7th century.[318] Yet the evidence for "pagan" beliefs and practices was not substantial enough to promote their social representatives to the position of opponents of Visigothic society. The so-called Isidorian educational programme was rather designed to provide for the gradual incorporation of such groups

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[314] Messmer, *Hispania-Idee und Gotenmythos*, Zurich 1960, 121–133; Linehan, *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain*, Oxford 1993, 1–3 and 72.

[315] *quaest. in Lev.* 11, 4 (PL 83, 328).

[316] *quaest. in Jos.* 8, 2 (PL 83, 375).

[317] For this reason Isidore mainly restricts his prooftexts to passages from the Old Testament, but in the *quaestiones* he relies also on the New Testament for his argument against heretics and "impious" people (*quaest. in Dtn.* 13, 1f.; PL 83, 364).

[318] For the continuing presence of pagan "remnants" cf. Hillgarth, "Popular Religion in Visigothic Spain", *Visigothic Spain. New Approaches*, Oxford 1980, 11–18 and Zeddies, *Religio et sacrilegium*, Frankfurt/M. *et al.* 2003, 191–197. For antipagan measures adopted in the 2nd half of the century see e.g. *c.* 11 of XII Toledo from 681 (Vives, *Concilios visigóticos e hispano-romanos*, Barcelona/Madrid 1963, 298f.). Some of the Visigothic tablets of slate found in the region of Salamanca were probably used for magical purposes, which was contrary to official church doctrine; cf. Collins, "Literacy and the Laity in Early Medieval Spain", *The Uses of Literacy in Early Medieval Europe*, Cambridge 1990, 118.

into the Gothic-Catholic community by way of continuous instruc-
tion and admonition. It should be recalled that officially all non-Jewish
inhabitants of the kingdom were already Christians, i.e. Catholics; for
this reason "pagans" could hardly be styled as the backdrop for Gothic-
Catholic identity. Isidore's silence on contemporary pagans is probably
also due to the fact that apparently they were more numerous in the
less Romanized north of the peninsula. Judaism with all its traditional
theological and intellectual standing was far more suitable to be pre-
sented as an opponent of Visigothic identity than any such thing as
"paganism", which did not exist as a coherent group anyway, nor did
it have the stature of an intellectually respectable "out-group" which
could match the Catholic Visigoths.[319] It should be remembered that
already Severus of Minorca disregarded the existence of pagans at the
beginning of the 5th century, focusing his attention exclusively on Jewish
opponents, who alone held respectable social positions.[320]

From Isidore's perspective, the Jews fulfil a negative function in Visi-
gothic society as devised by himself: they serve as a projection screen for
Catholic-Gothic identity which is constructed by demarcation. "The
Gothic kingdom of c. 700 no longer comprised an inner core of eth-
nically defined migrants. It was a unified state which defined itself as
Gothic, not by reference to a Roman stratum within its own popu-
lation, but against outsiders: the Franks of Gaul and the Romans of
Constantinople."[321] Although this statement is basically correct, it com-
pletely disregards the religious aspect. Isidore tried to provide Catholic
Goths with a religious sense of belonging by welding them together
against both a religious (internal) and a political (external) enemy.[322]

This ideology of Christian unity was thwarted not only because of
its inability to bridge the existing social and regional differences.[323] The

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[319] Isidore identified paganism with idolatry, the worship of images; see Tolan, *Sara-
cens. Islam in the Medieval European Imagination*, New York 2002, 12. In the second half of
the century King Reccesvinth remarked that after the extirpation of heresy "only the
Jews" polluted his kingdom: *Nam cum virtus Dei totum universaliter acie verbi sui radicitus here-
sum extirpavit surculum, sola Iudaeorum nequitia ingemiscimus regiminis nostri arva esse polluta* (*LV*
XII, 2, 3; MGH, LL I, 1, 413).

[320] Bradbury, *Severus of Minorca: Letter on the Conversion of the Jews*, Oxford 1996, 29.

[321] Heather, *The Goths*, Oxford and Cambridge/Mass. 1996, 298. For non-religious
aspects of Gothic ideology and rhetoric in the 7th century see ibid. 296f.

[322] For the construction of "internal strangers" see Zeddies, *Religio et sacrilegium*,
Frankfurt/M. *et al.* 2003, 104ff.

[323] Linehan, *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain*, Oxford 1993, 36f. Cf. also ibid.
69 for an interpretation of the "creative counter-culture which recoiled from the court

elite could not develop a sense of unity on the basis of economic inter-
ests only, therefore regional fragmentation may have increased towards
the end of the 7th century. In addition, Isidore's redefinition of Gothic
identity failed because it marginalized a demographically[324] and prob-
ably also economically important sector of the population. This may
be compared to the situation of the Byzantine empire after the coun-
cil of Chalcedon in 451, when a significant sector of the population—
the so-called Monophysites—was marginalized. On the other hand, the
emperor's identification with Christian orthodoxy gave political dissi-
dents the opportunity to voice opposition against the politically priv-
ileged denomination.[325] The political instrumentalization of Christian-
ity by the emperors gave a political dimension to religious questions.
The incantatory repetition of professions of Catholic faith in Visigothic
texts of the 7th century, which are often accompanied by anti-Jewish
statements and measures, apparently fulfilled a similar function to that
accorded to orthodox pronouncements in the Byzantine empire; Visi-
gothic professions of Catholicism should be regarded as a public decla-
ration of loyalty to the dominant ideology and to the kingdom built on
its basis.[326]

It should also be remembered that the attempts to marginalize the
Jews did not produce the desired result in everyday life, as shown by
the support given to Jews by Christian neighbours and even by clerical
and secular patrons and superiors. These infringements upon the offi-
cial doctrine of Catholic-Gothic identity and kingship show the shaky
basis upon which 7th-century society was built; the Isidorian ideal of
the Catholic *gens Gothorum* proved unable to integrate all relevant sec-
tors of the population. This integration failed on two levels: first, the

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and shrank from its ways." See also Gibert, "El Reino Visigodo y el Particularismo
Español", *I Goti in occidente. Settimane di studio* 3 (1956), 537–583.

[324] For the presumable numerical strength of Judaism cf. Lotter, "Die Entwicklung
des Judenrechts im christlichen Abendland bis zu den Kreuzzügen", *Judentum und
Antisemitismus von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, Düsseldorf 1984, 48f.

[325] This is probably the background of the *Akta dia Kalapodion*, which should not be
regarded—as done by Castritius—as evidence for a mass movement that tried to join
Judaism during the reign of Justinian I (it is significant that the opponents repeatedly
invoke the mother of God, mentioning their own baptism); the publicly voiced threat to
convert to Judaism is rather a political demonstration against the emperor and his juris-
diction; cf. Castritius, "Zur Konkurrenzsituation zwischen Judentum und Christentum
in der spätrömisch-frühbyzantinischen Welt", *Aschkenas* 8 (1998), 29–44.

[326] For this dimension of a "political theology" see Linehan, *History and the Historians
of Medieval Spain*, Oxford 1993, 29.

Jews with all their intellectual and economic potential were excluded
and declared to be superfluous and undesirable,[327] and second, Goths
and Hispano-Romans refused to develop a coherent sense of belonging,
preserving particular interests and contradictory trends, thus demon-
strating the failure of the official doctrine of unity.[328]

The cancellation of the prohibition of mixed marriages decreed by
Leovigild in 580, which by that time had come to be interpreted as
a prohibition of marriages between Goths and Hispano-Romans, was
still included in Reccesvinth's law code of 654. "The compilers …
deemed it worthy of inclusion, should an objection ever arise to mixed
marriages in Spain."[329] Apparently, the sense of belonging to different
sectors of the Christian population had not vanished in the 7th century,
as can be shown also by an analysis of epigraphic and literary sources
of the 630s.[330]

When Isidore promoted the religious change of 589 as a new *origo
gentis Gothorum* he argued against such conservative tendencies within
the Gothic aristocracy. The grievances expressed at the last Toledan
councils, the incantatory repetition of anti-Jewish measures—which
was apparently deemed necessary—and their savage intensification are
indications of an instable state of affairs; in reality, Visigothic society
was quite different from the ideal sketched by Isidore in his *sententiae*.
The double failure of the official Jewish policies, the marginalization
of the Jews and the thwarted construction of a Christian community
gives evidence to the unstable ideological foundation of the Gothic
monarchy, which had been laid—among others—by Isidore of Seville.

Isidore did not favour active mission among the Jews; he was content
with integrating the Catholic Hispano-Romans into the Gothic people

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[327] In spite of official ideology it was still possible in 688 to erect a tombstone to the
three children of the *dominus* Paragorus, son of the *dominus* Sapaudus, in Narbonne,
bearing a Jewish inscription; cf. Lotter, "Zur sozialen Hierarchie der Judenheit in
Spätantike und Frühmittelalter", *Aschkenas* 13 (2003), 341 f. (with further literature). For
Jews in leading economic positions in the second half of the 7th century ibid., 353 f. and
358.

[328] Linehan, *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain*, Oxford 1993, 73 ff. for the "dis-
integration" of the Visigothic kingdom on account of mounting regionalist tendencies.
However, this trend does not have to be interpreted in the pejorative sense of "decline"
since it may merely reflect similar developments in other regions of western Europe.

[329] Sivan, "The Appropriation of Roman Law in Barbarian Hands: 'Roman-Barba-
rian' Marriage in Visigothic Gaul and Spain", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of
Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 203.

[330] Claude, "Remarks about Relations between Visigoths and Hispano-Romans in
the Seventh Century", ibid. 127.

in order to stabilize the kingdom and its ruling elite.[331] This integration was not accomplished by the end of Isidore's lifetime; it was rather promoted as the principal aim of the so-called Isidorian educational programme which was to lay the foundations of this new society by continuous and lifelong conversion.[332] This project had been burdened with a severe handicap by Sisebut's forced baptisms, which endangered the integrity of the very faith that constituted the basis of "national" identity and political unity. The attempt to annihilate Jewish identity by collective baptism made Catholic Christianity all-inclusive, in much the same way as Roman citizenship had become universal for the free male population in late antiquity. Consequently new, alternative models were required which could provide for benefits of distinction, which were necessary to keep up a sense of particular identity among the ruling elite.[333] The failure to devise such alternatives was one of the factors which destabilized the Visigothic monarchy in the 7th century. The universalization of Gothic identity destroyed the boundaries which had kept it intact, and its territorial re-foundation was never successfully accomplished.

For reasons of sacramental theology the fathers of the 4th council of Toledo, headed by Isidore, prevented baptized Jews from returning to their ancestral religion,[334] but an analysis of Isidore's works yields no evidence that he followed Sisebut in trying to include the Jewish

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[331] Symbolic distinctions such as names and official titles were not sufficient to generate and preserve a sense of identity, as claimed by Liebeschuetz, "Citizen Status and Law in the Roman Empire and the Visigothic Kingdom", ibid. 149f. Contrary to Liebeschuetz' interpretation Isidore identified with the contemporary Goths, as can be seen in his *History of the Goths*. He propagated this attitude as the paradigm of Christian Spanish, i.e. Gothic, identity.

[332] Fontaine, "Conversion et culture chez les wisigoths d'Espagne", *La conversione al cristianesimo nell'Europa dell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 14 (1967), 131f.

[333] For social differentiation among the Goths in the 7th century see Heather, *The Goths*, Oxford and Cambridge/Mass. 1996, 284–290. The question whether Isidore's concept of a *gens Gothorum*, comprising descendants of Goths and Hispano-Romans, referred only to the economic and social elite or to the population at large is of no fundamental importance for the present study; to all intents and purposes his chief interest lay in providing a social basis for the kingdom, which referred primarily to the elite surrounding the king (cf. Geary, *The Myth of Nations*, Princeton/Oxford 2002, 134: "To be a 'Goth' was to be a member of the Visigothic kingdom's elite"). Yet the kingdom would have gained increased stability if the values propagated in Isidore's "educational programme" were not limited to such an elite but shared by a larger part of the population.

[334] González Salinero, *Las conversiones forzosas de los judíos en el reino visigodo*, Rome 2000, 38–43.

part of the Hispano-Roman population in the new Gothic community. An argument from silence, which should not be taken as conclusive evidence on its own, can illustrate this point. Augustine had invoked his interpretation of Luke 14, 23 (*compelle intrare*) in order to justify the use of force against contemporary heretics and schismatics, especially with regard to Donatists, but only after they had been declared heretics by imperial decree in 405, but never did he invoke it against Jews or pagans. In this connection he also adduced a prophecy from Ps. 71, 11 ("all kings will bow down to him and all nations will serve him") which he saw fulfilled or about to be fulfilled in the present.[335] Isidore also quotes this prooftext at the beginning of his treatise *de fide catholica*,[336] but significantly his interpretation is limited to a presentation of his favoured concept, the universal vocation of the gentiles. He does not refer to the Augustinian concept of *compelle intrare*, neither with regard to heretics (who are not discussed anyway) nor concerning the Jews; he does not adapt the Augustinian anti-heretical model to his own anti-Jewish agenda.

The conversion of the Visigoths to Catholicism had initiated a period of Catholic expansion resulting in a thorough restructuring of the Catholic church, which was mainly linked to its integration into the political system dominated from the centre at Toledo. This new epoch of Catholic mission resulted in the incorporation of the Arian population within a few years. Isidore tried to exploit the momentum of this process for his project of forging a new Gothic identity, based on "Barbarian", Roman and Catholic foundations.[337] However, he refused to endorse the royal policies of forced baptism, declining to extend this synthesis also to the Jews. It is possible, but improbable, that he knew that there was no evidence for the successful conversion of larger groups of Jews in the preceding centuries.[338] His attitude was apparently much more influenced by patristic tradition which did not advocate active mission among contemporary Jews. In contrast to Sise-

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[335] *ep.* 173, 10 (CSEL 44, 647 f.).

[336] *fid. cath.* I, 1, 3 (PL 83, 451).

[337] Fontaine notes in Isidore "une idéologie de synthèse" ("Conversion et culture chez les wisigoths d'Espagne", *La conversione al cristianesimo nell'Europa dell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 14, 1967, 117). See also Pohl, "Der Gebrauch der Vergangenheit in der Ideologie der *regna*", *Ideologie e pratiche del reimpego nell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 46 (1999), 149–175.

[338] As indicated by the Ambrosiaster, *quaest. vet. et nov. test.* 44, 12 (CSEL 50, 78): *Cum enim in universa terra novi testamenti sit praedicatio, tam raro et difficile Iudaeus fidelis invenitur, ut omnes ecclesiae novi testamenti gentium nominentur.*

but's novel approach, which relied on coercion and violence, Isidore favoured antique tradition which tolerated the Jews as a marginal group on the verge of society. Unlike his notion of Christian kingship, which is marked by innovations foreshadowing medieval concepts, his perception and presentation of the Jews is determined by patristic views which he transmitted to the European middle ages. Isidore follows Augustine in instrumentalizing "the Jew" as a foil for Christian apologetics,[339] but unlike his illustrious predecessor he supplements this with the presentation of a "proto-national" political agenda,[340] promoting the conceptualization of an all-embracing Christian community based on (redefined) ethnic notions.

Although he recognizes the universal appeal of Christianity, Isidore conceives of the universal church as the sum of local churches which preserve their independence, being united only by the bond of common faith. He transfers the historic mission within the economy of salvation, attributed to the Roman empire by earlier authors, to the particular *gentes*,[341] which entails an enormous increase in the importance of the Visigothic church, being promoted to the position of a link in the chain constituting the universal church. This gentile church rests on two pillars: on the universal Catholic faith and on the particular identity of the Gothic people, nourished by its own historical traditions, whose king claims to have replaced the emperor in his part of the former empire by *imitatio imperii*.[342] The gentiles (*gentes*) are no longer seen as enemies of the empire, as Barbarians, but as heirs of Rome.[343] This generalization of the classical tradition of antiquity is justified with reference to the biblical statements concerning universal salvation.[344]

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[339] Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law*, Berkeley *et al.* 1999, 40.

[340] On Isidore's lack of Augustine's "neutral political sphere", the *saeculum*, see ibid. 109.

[341] Already Augustine had expressed reservations concerning the historic mission of the empire, putting Romans and "Barbarians" on the same level (*ep.* 197, 4; CSEL 57, 234).

[342] This is suggested by a comparison between the parallel expressions Isidore uses for Suinthila and Caesar; the former *monarchiam regni primus idem potitus* (*hist.* 62; Rodríguez Alonso, 276), and Caesar *monarchiam totius imperii Romani obtinuit* (*chron.* 234a; CCL 112, 113).

[343] The name of Christ is *per omnes gentes diffusum, cui et reges obediunt, et gentes serviunt* (*fid. cath.* I, 1, 3; PL 83, 451). See also *fid. cath.* II, 2, 3 (PL 83, 503): *Cuius ab ortu solis usque ad occasum magnum est nomen eius in gentibus*. For the gradual advance of the "gentile point of view" in early medieval historiography see Löwe, *Von Theoderich dem Großen zu Karl dem Großen*, Darmstadt 1956, 34f.

[344] *fid. cath.* I, 1, 3 (PL 83, 451).

From Isidore's perspective, the universal church has taken the place
of the empire.[345] This concept had the advantage that it was possible
to conceive of the existence of several particular churches within the
one universal church, whereas the traditional notion of the Roman
empire could hardly be accomodated with the establishment of various
independent kingdoms on its territory. Therefore, Isidore combined
the legitimation of the independence and sovereignty of the Visigothic
kingdom with the propagation of the idea of the vocation of all gentile
peoples to the universal Catholic church. His theological and political
thinking is marked by the notion of the *universitas omnium gentium*[346] which
does not attach a privileged position to any people, neither Romans
nor Byzantines. The *gentes* are given a political and legal importance
which had been reserved to the terms *populus* and *res publica* in classical
antiquity.[347]

In the migration period, the identity of the Visigoths had been
determined primarily by military categories.[348] This is no particular
feature of the Goths, but characteristic of several "archaic" groups:
"The original sources … equate *gens* (people) with 'army'. In addition,
the sources attest the basically polyethnic character of the *gentes*."[349] It

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[345] Reydellet, *La Royauté dans la littérature latine de Sidoine Apollinaire à Isidore de Séville*,
Rome 1981, 556f.

[346] *fid. cath.* II, 24, 2 (PL 83, 530). The great importance he attaches to the *gentes* even
gave rise to a curious mistake in the manuscript transmission of this treatise. According
to the majority of manuscripts (which points to an early date of the modification) the
text of the first chapter of the first book, discussing the generation of Christ by the
father, reads as follows: *Christum gentium* (!) *ab omnipotente patre cognoscant* (this version
is reproduced in Arévalo's edition: *fid. cath.* I, 1, 2; PL 83, 450), but only a single
manuscript has the version that makes sense within the context of a discussion of
Christ's generation: *genitum*; cf. Ziolkowski, 4 note 27.

[347] Adams, "The Political Grammar of Early Hispano-Gothic Historians", *Medieval
Iberia. Essays on the History and Literature of Medieval Spain*, New York *et al.* 1997, 5 and 14.
For an analysis of the relevant terminology in antiquity see Gschnitzer, "Volk, Nation,
Nationalismus, Masse: Altertum", *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* 7 (1992), 151–171. *Populus*
referred to the assembly of the citizens, to the "people" as the sovereign of the state
(ibid. 157). On *gentes* and *populus* see now Geary, *The Myth of Nations*, Princeton/Oxford
2002, 49–52; for patristic usage Adams, *The* populus *of Augustine and Jerome*, New Haven
1971. For the conceptualization of the provincial Romans as a particularistic *gens* see
Claude, "Gentile und territoriale Staatsideen im Westgotenreich", *FMSt* 6 (1972), 7f.
However, Isidore never uses the term *gens Romanorum*, nor does this term appear in
conciliar legislation from Visigothic Spain; cf. ibid. 18 and 21.

[348] For the importance of the military factor see Heather, *The Goths*, Oxford and
Cambridge/Mass. 1996, 169–174, with discussion of earlier scholarship. See also Amo-
ry, *People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy*, Cambridge 1997, 259.

[349] Wolfram, "*Origo et Religio*", *EME* 3 (1994), 21. On the multiple layers of Gothic

is significant that no extant law defines Gothic identity.[350] The factors determining identity changed over time among the Visigoths as among other ethnic groups.[351]

After the end of the migration period, Gothic self-perception had increasingly been defined by religious parameters;[352] this development had been foreshadowed by the "religious revolution of the 4th century" which increased the importance of religion for shaping and defining identities.[353] For the Goths, the religious component of identity comprised first the profession of the Arian denomination of Christianity, regarded almost as a *fides gothica*, which was later replaced by the *fides catholica*.[354] The development of a new concept of Gothic identity may

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identity see also Pohl, "Goten", *RGA* 12 (1998), 439. For a critical position on this approach see Kulikowski, "Nation versus Army: A Necessary Contrast?", *On Barbarian Identity*, Turnhout 2002, 69–84.

[350] Liebeschuetz, "Citizen Status and Law in the Roman Empire and the Visigothic Kingdom", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 141.

[351] Pohl, "Introduction: Strategies of Distinction", ibid. 8. In accordance with this assessment Claude stresses the ethnically heterogeneous composition of the Visigoths ("Remarks about Relations between Visigoths and Hispano-Romans in the Seventh Century", ibid. 120). For ethnogenesis of the Visigoths see Heather, "The Creation of the Visigoths", *The Visigoths. From the Migration Period to the Seventh Century*, Woodbridge 1999, 43–73.

[352] For multiple dimensions of Gothic identity during the migration period cf. Heather, *The Goths*, Oxford and Cambridge/Mass. 1996, 178, who highlights the existence of several "layers of identity" that came to the fore of conscience and self-perception of group members depending on the changing historical context. Traditional Roman identity had also comprised several layers of identity since late republican times; therefore a Roman citizen could combine more that one identity; cf. Demandt, *Die Spätantike*, Munich 1989, 306; Geary, *The Myth of Nations*, Princeton/Oxford 2002, 69. For a similar situation in 6th-century Italy see Amory, *People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy*, Cambridge 1997, 276. For the historical variability of interpretative patterns applied to social groups see also Fried, "*Gens* und *regnum*. Wahrnehmungs- und Deutungskategorien politischen Wandels im frühen Mittelalter", *Sozialer Wandel im Mittelalter*, Sigmaringen 1994, 78.

[353] Stroumsa, "From Anti-Judaism to Antisemitism in Early Christianity?", *Contra Iudaeos. Ancient and Medieval Polemics between Christians and Jews*, Tübingen 1996, 19.

[354] For Arianism as *fides gothica* cf. Godoy/Vilella, "De la *fides gothica* a la ortodoxia nicena", *Los Visigodos. Historia y Civilización*, Murcia 1986, 117–144; however, the authors cannot show the use of this term in contemporary sources. Nor does Isidore mention a *fides gothica*; he uses *gothicus* only as an attribute to *gens, stirps, origo, missa, liturgia* and *scriptura*. The last three nouns, which belong to the sphere of religion, do not refer to the dogmatic content of Arianism, but to the cult, for which the Gothic language used in the liturgy and in Ulfila's Bible had acquired the standing of a distinctive symbol. Amory showed that it was only at a later stage that Arianism was regarded as a specifically Gothic creed in Italy (*People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy*, Cambridge 1997, 260f.). In much the same way this could have happened in Spain as late as

be compared to the creation of a new Christian identity after the Constantinian division in the 4th century,[355] but also to the construction of a "community of belief" by Gregory of Tours.[356] Gregory did not take a Roman or Frankish "ethnic identity" as his main criterion for describing the political situation of his time, but religious differences between denominations.[357]

The religious conceptualization of the Gothic people after its settlement in Spain becomes apparent when it is compared to the earlier form, prevalent during the migration period, when the group was constituted by those who joined the military formation of the fighting Goths.[358] The constantly changing "gentile" society could only survive because it proved to be very flexible.[359] Only when the Gothic army became territorialized did social mobility decrease considerably.[360] Against Wenskus's theory of the *Traditionskern* (kernel of tradition)[361]

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under Leovigild's rule; see Wood, "Conclusion: Strategies of Distinction", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 302.

[355] For Christian identity in the 4th century cf. Stroumsa, "From Anti-Judaism to Antisemitism in Early Christianity?", *Contra Iudaeos. Ancient and Medieval Polemics between Christians and Jews*, Tübingen 1996, 23. For recent discussions about the "conversion" of the Roman empire see Rebillard, "La 'conversion' de l'Empire romain selon Peter Brown", *Annales* 54 (1999), 813–824.

[356] Keely, "Arians and Jews in the *Histories* of Gregory of Tours", *JMH* 23 (1997), 110: "His chief interest lies … in the development of a Christian community whose identity is shaped by defining what it is not."

[357] James, "Gregory of Tours and the Franks", *After Rome's Fall. Narrators and Sources of Early Medieval History*, Toronto *et al.* 1998, 51–66. See also Heinzelmann, "Heresy in Books I and II of Gregory of Tours' *Historiae*", ibid. 70.

[358] On Wolfram's view of the *gens* as a polyethnic community of members united in an *exercitus* see also Jarnut, "Aspekte frühmittelalterlicher Ethnogenese in historischer Sicht", *Herrschaft und Ethnogenese im Frühmittelalter*, Münster 2002, 21. On the *exercitus Gothorum* Werner, "Volk, Nation, Nationalismus, Masse: Mittelalter", *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* 7 (1992), 187 and 195. On Gothic settlement Schwarcz, "Relations between Ostrogoths and Visigoths in the 5th and 6th Centuries and the Question of Visigothic Settlement in Aquitaine and Spain", *Integration und Herrschaft*, Vienna 2002, 217–226.

[359] On the changing meaning of the term *gens* see Jarnut, "Aspekte frühmittelalterlicher Ethnogenese in historischer Sicht", *Herrschaft und Ethnogenese im Frühmittelalter*, Münster 2002, 19–27. On Wenskus's category of "pseudologische Gleichsetzung" (referring to people associating themselves with another group) see Claude, "Gentile und territoriale Staatsideen im Westgotenreich", *FMSt* 6 (1972), 3.

[360] Wolfram, *Geschichte der Goten*, Munich ³1990, 301.

[361] For questions of ethnogenesis in late antiquity and the early middle ages see Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung. Das Werden der frühmittelalterlichen gentes*, Cologne 1961. Wenskus' approach, based on the assumption that there was a basically constant core of oral traditions and ruling elites ("kernel of tradition"), was modified and adapted by Wolfram; cf. Wolfram, "Typen der Ethnogenese. Ein Versuch", *Die Franken*

Heather maintains that identity is not so much characterized by "a unique set of objective cultural features" but rather determined by "self-identification and identification by others".[362]

According to Heather, identities are subject to historical change, based in the last analysis on "the transmission over time of a perception of difference".[363] From a deconstructionist perspective, Amory even denies any continuity of historical "realia" behind different identities; according to him individuals—and those who wrote about them—chose such identities as mere names in accordance with the requirements of the time.[364] As mere names such self-perceptions could therefore be associated with different historical "facts" and circumstances. For Amory, the so-called Barbarian cultures are rather continuations of regional, provincial culture which had developed within the Roman empire and which became more prominent after the weakening and demise of the imperial framework.[365] However, in spite of the plausibility of this view it is hard to deny that at least something of a "kernel of tradition" must have "travelled" with the Barbarian peoples, given cer-

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und Alemannen bis zur "Schlacht bei Zülpich" (496/97), Berlin 1998, 608–627. On the model developed by Wenskus and its modification in subsequent scholarship see Pohl, "Gentilismus", *RGA* 11 (1998), 91–101; see also Jarnut, "Aspekte frühmittelalterlicher Ethnogenese in historischer Sicht", *Herrschaft und Ethnogenese im Frühmittelalter*, Münster 2002, 20f. For a critical assessment of the "*Traditionskern* ethnogenesis theory" (in Gillet's terminology) see Gillet, "Ethnicity, History, and Methodology", *On Barbarian Identity*, Turnhout 2002, 1–18; for a defence of modern approaches to ethnogenesis Pohl, "Ethnicity, Theory, and Tradition: A Response", ibid. 221–239; for the problems associated with the *Traditionskern* model ibid. 231.

[362] Heather, *The Goths*, Oxford and Cambridge/Mass. 1996, 3; see also 91. On "subjective ethnicity" see also Harrison, "The Lombards in the Early Carolingian Epoch", *Charlemagne and His Heritage*, Turnhout 1997, 129.

[363] Heather, *The Goths*, Oxford and Cambridge/Mass. 1996, 6.

[364] See also Geary, *The Myth of Nations*, Princeton/Oxford 2002, 118: "… it appears that all that remained constant were names, and these were vessels that could hold different contents at different times."

[365] For changing identities see also Geary, "Ethnic Identity as a Situational Construct in the Early Middle Ages", *Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien* 113 (1983), 15–26; Collins, "Law and Ethnic Identity in the Western Kingdoms in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries", *Medieval Europeans*, Basingstoke *et al.* 1998, esp. 2 and Hummer, "The Fluidity of Barbarian Identity. The Ethnogenesis of Alemanni and Suebi A.D. 200–500", *EME* 7 (1998), 1–27. For the interpretation of archaeological findings relating to the history of the Goths see Bierbrauer, "Archäologie und Geschichte der Goten vom 1.–7. Jahrhundert. Versuch einer Bilanz", *FMSt* 28 (1994), 51–171.

tain elements of "Germanic" influence on provincial Roman dialects (and their subsequent adaptation in Romance languages).[366]

The changing conceptualization of the Gothic community is an indication that the Gothic people was no "natural" entity which would have been determined and conditioned by anthropological or biological factors.[367] The sense of community was rather subject to changing historical ideas cherished or "believed" by members of the group.[368] Nonetheless, such members of a *gens* may hold the opinion that they belong to a community constituted by common origins; such a belief may help to hide the fact that the group is rather determined by factors due to political expediency.[369] The most important factor was not a constant, objective core of traditions (*Traditionskern*) but the members' conviction of forming part of a group founded on common traditions, even though in reality these may have been adaptable and subject to historical change, conditioned by common political interests.[370]

When the Goths adopted the Arian form of Christianity under the emperor Valens, it was the official religion at the imperial court. Only later, when the Nicene denomination had become Roman orthodoxy, did the Goths use their Arian denomination as a marker of their distinct identity as opposed to the Romans; it is improbable that they chose and stuck to Arianism out of a certain theological preference and predilection; they rather kept it for reasons of political propriety which were due to their existence as a minority on Roman territory.[371] Sixth-

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[366] On linguistic remnants of Lombard in Italian cf. Harrison, "The Lombards in the Early Carolingian Epoch", *Charlemagne and His Heritage*, Turnhout 1997, 130.

[367] Fried, "*Gens* und *regnum*. Wahrnehmungs- und Deutungskategorien politischen Wandels im frühen Mittelalter", *Sozialer Wandel im Mittelalter*, Sigmaringen 1994, 82.

[368] For the invention, modification and transfer of traditions and identities and for myths about origins and their social functions cf. Reynolds, "Our Forefathers? Tribes, Peoples, and Nations in the Historiography of the Age of Migrations", *After Rome's Fall. Narrators and Sources of Early Medieval History*, Toronto *et al.* 1998, 17–36, esp. 35.

[369] Wolfram, "*Origo et Religio*", *EME* 3 (1994), 20 f.; Werner, "Volk, Nation, Nationalismus, Masse: Mittelalter", *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* 7 (1992), 177.

[370] Wolfram, "*Origo et Religio*", *EME* 3 (1994), 36 and James, "Gregory of Tours and the Franks", *After Rome's Fall. Narrators and Sources of Early Medieval History*, Toronto *et al.* 1998, 52. On the development of special loyalties and particularistic identities (*Sonderbewußtsein*) among warriors of "Barbarian" kings and on the importance of these factors for the integration of early medieval groups see Pohl, "Gentilismus", *RGA* 11 (1998), 99 f.

[371] "Arian conceptions of a limited Christian community were appropriate for preserving a minority belief." (Amory, *People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy*, Cambridge 1997, 245); see also ibid. 275 and Russell, *The Germanization of Early Medieval Christianity*, New York/Oxford 1994, 137–142; Heather, *The Goths*, Oxford and Cambridge/Mass. 1996,

century Italian papyri refer to Arianism as the *lex Gothorum*,[372] and a Burgundian source calls Arianism the *lex Gotica*.[373] John of Biclaro is still a representative of the older, dualistic view which does not include the Roman population of Spain into the *gens Gothorum*.[374]

The conversion of the Goths to Catholicism in 589 implied a redefinition of Gothic identity and a new conceptualization of their self-image, made necessary because older notions (such as "common descent" or membership of the army of the fighting Goths) had become obsolete after a prolonged period of settlement among the Hispano-Romans in Spain. However, Isidore still defines a *gens* with regard to common origins and historical memory, which is a clear reference to the concept of *origo gentis*.[375] Yet it is important to note that groups could adapt their historical memory to changing circumstances, inventing new origins for themselves.[376] The acts of the 3rd council of Toledo clearly refer to an "innovation" of the Gothic people which can be regarded as a new origin of the *gens Gothorum*, which was subsequently elaborated on and considered normative by part of the elite through-

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313 ff. For the *damnatio Arrianae hereseos* as the objective pursued by Gregory the Great in his dialogues see Messmer, *Hispania-Idee und Gotenmythos*, Zurich 1960, 122 f.

[372] Heather, *The Goths*, Oxford and Cambridge/Mass. 1996, 313.

[373] *Passio Sancti Sigismundi Regis* IV (MGH, SRM, II, 335). Gregory the Great uses the phrase *fides Wisigothorum* when writing about Leander's stay in Constantinople: … *et te illuc pro causis fidei Wisigothorum legatio perduxisset* (*moral. ep. ad Leandr.* 1; CCL 143, 1); however, the attribute *Wisigothorum* may instead refer to the noun *legatio*.

[374] Claude, "Gentile und territoriale Staatsideen im Westgotenreich", *FMSt* 6 (1972), 15.

[375] *Gens est multitudo ab uno principio orta, sive ab alia natione secundum propriam collectionem distincta* (*etym.* IX, 2, 1; Reydellet, 41). On Isidore's definition see Murray, "Reinhard Wenskus on 'Ethnogenesis', Ethnicity, and the Origin of the Franks", *On Barbarian Identity*, Turnhout 2002, 66 note 95. For Isidore's concept of *gens* as "Abstammungsgemeinschaft" see Claude, "Gentile und territoriale Staatsideen im Westgotenreich", *FMSt* 6 (1972), 17. For the literary form of *origo gentis* cf. Bickermann, "Origines gentium", *Classical Philology* 47 (1952), 65–81; Pohl, "Introduction: Strategies of Distinction", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 6; Reynolds, "Medieval *origines gentium* and the Community of the Realm", *History* 68 (1983), 375–390, repr. with corrections in: Ideas and Solidarities of the Medieval Laity, London 1995, II; Wolfram, "Le genre de l'*origo gentis*", *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 68 (1990), 789–801 and id., "*Origo et Religio*", *EME* 3 (1994), 19–38.

[376] Jarnut, "Aspekte des Kontinuitätsproblems in der Völkerwanderungszeit", *Herrschaft und Ethnogenese im Frühmittelalter*, Münster 2002, 16 on the importance of stressing elements of discontinuity when developing new views of particular, "gentile" history. "The *origines gentium* always speak of origins and beginnings in a manner which presupposes earlier origins and beginnings." (Wolfram, "*Origo et Religio*", *EME* 3, 1994, 25).

out the 7th century.[377] It was especially significant that this reconceptualization was based on a religious criterion.[378] The self-glorification expressed in the acts of the council of 589 is in accordance with older, originally pagan ideas about the singularity of one's own group.[379]

In the 6th century the self-perception of the Goths had been subjected to constant change and even erosion[380] which provided the basis for the creation of a new paradigm in 589, the invention of a new "origin of the Goths". At that time the Goths were looking back on several centuries of experience in defining their identity as Arians in conscious and deliberate opposition to the Roman, Nicene creed.[381] When they converted to Catholicism, a new form of religious and "ethnic" demarcation sug-

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[377] … *gloriosissimus princeps omnes regiminis sui pontifices in unum convenire mandasset ut tam de eius conversione quam de gentis Gotorum innovatione in Domino exsultarent* (III Toledo, *prol.*; Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 50). See Pohl, "Goten", *RGA* 12 (1998), 439 f. on the significant changes of meaning suffered by the term "Goth", compared to less far-reaching modifications of terminology among other *gentes*.

[378] Teillet, *Des Goths à la nation gothique*, Paris 1984, 446. For the religious foundation of the idea of the *gens Gothorum* as a political community—as opposed to the archaic *gens barbarorum*—ibid., 524–527. However, some distinctions within this new Catholic people were still kept alive in the second half of the 7th century; cf. ibid., 447 note 171. Of special importance are the restrictions made for the succession to the throne in *c.* 3 of V Toledo from 636 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 282) and *c.* 17 of VI Toledo from 638 (ibid., 326 f.: … *nullus … nisi genere Gotus … provehatur ad apicem regni*). Even a relatively late law enacted by Ervig (680–687) makes a distinction: … *seu sit Gotus sive Romanus* (*LV* IX, 2, 9; MGH, LL, I, 1, 377). Stroheker ("Leowigild", *Germanentum und Spätantike*, Zurich/Stuttgart 1965, 162) maintains that the distinction between Goths and Romans did not cease until the end of the kingdom. However, this may rather be due to a conservative trend characteristic of legal language; "legalistic perfectionism" may have given rise to an all-inclusive numbering of all possible groups of persons; cf. Claude, "Remarks about Relations between Visigoths and Hispano-Romans in the Seventh Century", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 130 note 87. One should rather assume that all (Christian) subjects of the king were regarded as *Gothi*; cf. Claude, "Gentile und territoriale Staatsideen im Westgotenreich", *FMSt* 6 (1972), 24. According to Geary, the stipulation that kings should be of Gothic descent was meant to exclude Franks and Aquitanians from succession; cf. Geary, *The Myth of Nations*, Princeton/Oxford 2002, 133.

[379] "… ethnic communities claimed collective excellence that was based on God's (or, originally, a God's) predilection, noble origins, heroic exploits, and successful kings." (Pohl, "Introduction: Strategies of Distinction", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 6).

[380] Claude, "Remarks about Relations between Visigoths and Hispano-Romans in the Seventh Century", ibid. 130.

[381] Heather, *The Goths*, Oxford and Cambridge/Mass. 1996, 304 f. For the identity-generating function of Christianity and especially of Arianism in the process of the emergence of new ethnic and political entities out of different *gentes* cf. Brennecke, "*Imitatio-reparatio-continuatio*. Die Judengesetzgebung im Ostgotenreich Theoderichs des Großen als *reparatio imperii*?", *ZAC* 4 (2000), 136.

gested itself: the opposition to Judaism, which became a new and constant feature in the 7th century, but which in fact continued the anti-Roman strategy of earlier centuries. Traditional Roman and Catholic anti-Judaism was taken over at the time of conversion and adapted to the political agenda of the Catholic Gothic monarchy. The integration of the Roman tradition provided the basis for the anti-Jewish bend of the new Gothic self-image. In this connection it is important to remember that the ethnic construction of the identity of larger communities was only possible by using elements of Roman culture.[382]

The Jews fulfilled a similar, negative function in Byzantine anti-Jewish literature written during the 7th century.[383] Before the 4th century, Roman identity had at least partially been shaped in opposition to the "Barbarians" outside the borders of the empire,[384] but the Gothic identity of the 7th century was defined mainly by drawing a line between the new, Catholic *gens Gothorum* and the Jews inside the borders of one's own political entity,[385] while groups living outside the kingdom such as Byzantines ("Romans") and Franks receded into the background. The concentration on an internal "out-group" is also due to an increasing trend towards "provincialization" in the wake of the break-up of the ancient *oikoumenē*.[386] Parts of the Visigothic ruling elite, which had incorporated Romans such as Isidore of Seville, adopted the traditional Catholic anti-Judaism for their provincial, "proto-national" agenda.[387]

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[382] "… the concept of *gens* itself, applied to these large polities, was an achievement only due to literacy and abstract thinking. On the long run, none of the ethnic communities could survive without relying on the Roman-Christian discourse and the forms of cohesion it could offer." (Pohl, "Telling the Difference: Signs of Ethnic Identity", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 67).

[383] Olster, *Roman Defeat, Christian Response, and the Literary Construction of the Jew*, Philadelphia 1994, 21.

[384] Noethlichs, *Das Judentum und der römische Staat*, Darmstadt 1996, 41. For the classical period see Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy*, Oxford 1989, for Roman antiquity Dauge, *Le Barbare: Recherches sur la conception romaine de la barbarie et de la civilisation*, Brussels 1981, and now Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity*, Princeton 2004.

[385] A crisis of Christian self-perception in 7th-century Byzantium also led to an intensification of anti-Jewish literary production; cf. Olster, *Roman Defeat, Christian Response, and the Literary Construction of the Jew*, Philadelphia 1994, 18 f. Yet the Byzantine crisis had mainly external causes, namely the repeated defeats suffered against the Arabs.

[386] For the development of a "particularistic consensus" see Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville. Genèse et originalité de la culture hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*, Turnhout 2000, 365.

[387] In a conciliar canon the social elite is described as being composed by four different groups: *omnes paene Spaniae sacerdotes omnesque seniores vel iudices ac ceteros homines officii*

Isidore does not pursue a literary argument against heretics and pagans; by contrast, polemics against the Jews, which are addressed to his Christian audience, acquire new and increased significance. Traditional methods employed in the literature written *adversus Iudaeos* are used to question and refute positions attributed to the Jewish minority;[388] this strategy is meant to bolster the self-confidence and group identity of the new *gens Gothorum* composed of the Catholic part of the Hispano-Roman population and of descendants of the "earlier" Goths. The legal bond still uniting Jewish and Christian Roman citizens is superseded by a religious one.[389] The status of Roman citizen was kept until 654, also for Jews. A slave of a Jew who was set free acquired his former master's Roman citizenship, but without being united to him by a patron-client relationship.[390]

The increasing replacement of the ancient term *populus* by the concept of *gens* also pointed in that direction. Isidore's different definitions of these two terms shed some light on the matter: while a *populus* is kept together by law and internal concord, a *gens* is defined by the common origin, which makes it possible to base it on mythic origins, determined by biological or religious criteria.[391]

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palatini (VII Toledo *c.* 1 from 646; Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 342 f.). It is significant that in this case the "ethnic" label is replaced by a territorial term. See also Díaz, "Visigothic Political Institutions", *The Visigoths. From the Migration Period to the Seventh Century*, Woodbridge 1999, 344 f.

[388] González Salinero, "Catholic Anti-Judaism in Visigothic Spain", *The Visigoths. Studies in Culture and Society*, Leiden *et al.* 1999, 133.

[389] For the changing meaning of *civis* in Visigothic parlance cf. Teillet, *Des Goths à la nation gothique*, Paris 1984, 555. The term increasingly acquired the meaning "inhabitant".

[390] *LV* XII, 2, 14 (MGH, LL, I, 1, 421; a law enacted by Sisebut): ... *ad civium Romanorum dignitatem eundem manumittere debebit.* Isidore mentions Roman citizens only in the *Etymologies*, and this only with reference to republican Rome. See Adams, "Ideology and the Requirements of 'Citizenship' in Visigothic Spain: The Case of the *Judaei*", *Societas* 2 (1972), 317–332 and id., "The Political Grammar of Ildephonsus of Toledo: A Preliminary Report", *The Visigoths. Studies in Culture and Society*, Leiden *et al.* 1999, 157: "That Creed was the basic citizenship-test of the Visigothic Church-State, without acceptance of which ... no subject could qualify for participation in the civil life of seventh-century Spain."

[391] *Etym.* IX, 4, 5. 6 (Reydellet, 159): *Populus est humanae multitudinis ⟨coetus⟩ iuris consensu et concordi communione sociatus. Populus autem eo distat a plebibus, quod populi universi cives sunt ... Populus ergo tota civitas est.* Following Aug. *civ. Dei* XIX, 24, this is a clear reference to the ancient tradition defining the community of citizens as being united by a common legal condition. By contrast, a *gens* is based on an ideologically determined common origin (*etym.* IX, 2, 1; see *supra*, p. 267, n. 375).

Because of the diverse composition of the "polyethnic Gothic community", authors of the 5th century referred to the Goths by using the plural *populi*.[392] In the 6th and 7th centuries the older, military conceptualization of identity proved inadequate to legitimize the claim of the Goths to rule over the kingdom they were in control of. The new demarcation of Gothic identity, taking over patterns of Roman and Christian thinking, constituted a break with the flexible handling of ethnic characteristics during the migration period.[393] The new, religious foundation of Gothic self-perception made it possible to integrate the Catholic majority of the Hispano-Roman population into the community of the Goths, which was now conceptualized on the basis of territorial and religious criteria. This new *gens Gothorum* could even be regarded as one *populus*; the introduction to the *Antiqua* of the *Leges Visigothorum* mentions the king of the Goths and one *populus*, but no more the two *gentes* of Goths and Romans.[394]

Isidore's literary construction of Gothic identity can be compared to the endeavours of other authors, mainly descendants of the provincial Roman population, who tried to create an ideological foundation

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[392] Wolfram, *Geschichte der Goten*, Munich ³1990, 238; Geary, *The Myth of Nations*, Princeton/Oxford 2002, 56ff. For Isidore's interpretation of the plural *populi* cf. *dif.* I, 331 (Codoñer, 234): *Cum enim populos numero plurali dicimus, urbes significamus; cum populum, unius multitudinem civitatis intelligimus*. Also in the *tomus fidei* recited in Reccared's name at the 3rd council of Toledo the community of subjects is referred to as *populi*: *Deus omnipotens pro utilitatibus populorum regni nobis culmen subire tribuerit* (*Regis professio fidei*; Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 54). See also *c.* 75 of IV Toledo (ibid. 252): ... *totius Spaniae populis*. The use of the plural reflects the "depolitization" of the one *populus* that had been regarded as the bearer of sovereignty in ancient public law; cf. Adams, "The Political Grammar of Early Hispano-Gothic Historians", *Medieval Iberia. Essays on the History and Literature of Medieval Spain*, New York *et al.* 1997, 12f.

[393] Pohl, "Telling the Difference: Signs of Ethnic Identity", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 68. See also García Moreno, "Gothic Survivals in the Visigothic Kingdoms of Toulouse and Toledo", *Francia* 21 (1994), 1–15.

[394] Stroheker, "Leowigild", *Germanentum und Spätantike*, Zurich/Stuttgart 1965, 161f. The use of the singular clearly reflects the older concept of the one *populus* constituting the foundation of the state. Cf. Zientara, "*Populus-Gens-Natio*. Einige Probleme aus dem Bereich der ethnischen Terminologie des frühen Mittelalters", *Nationalismus in vorindustrieller Zeit*, Munich 1986, 11–20. Isidore uses the terms *gens* and *natio* as synonyms; cf. Claude, "Remarks about Relations between Visigoths and Hispano-Romans in the Seventh Century", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 117 note 4. For terminological developments in Gothic Spain cf. Adams, "The Political Grammar of Early Hispano-Gothic Historians", *Medieval Iberia. Essays on the History and Literature of Medieval Spain*, New York *et al.* 1997, 1–24.

for "Barbarian" kingdoms established on former Roman territory.[395] Following the example set by the fathers of the 3rd council of Toledo, Isidore proclaimed Catholic Christianity as the sole determining factor of Gothic identity. He tried to underpin this concept with religious and cultural foundations in order to provide for internal cohesion among the members of the new ruling elite, but the unity of the new *gens* proclaimed in theory was hardly reflected in reality.

In view of the difficulty of isolating an external criterion that could have served as a distinctive marker of the *gens*,[396] Catholic faith suggested itself as a symbol, making it possible to distinguish between insiders and outsiders. The price that was paid was the exclusion of part of the Hispano-Roman population, the Jewish minority.[397] However, the persecution of this minority was not inevitable; Catholic tradition could have provided models of accomodating their existence in the Catholic Gothic monarchy. Alternative options could have suggested themselves, such as the conceptualization of the king as ruler over all the inhabitants of his kingdom, who would be considered lord of his subjects. Yet this model may have been difficult to promote because of the lack of dynastic continuity; therefore the Visigothic monarchy deemed it necessary to rely on religious legitimation, unlike the Merovingian kings in contemporary Gaul.

Gregory of Tours does not stress any such thing as the Frankish identity of the inhabitants of the Merovingian kingdoms; he rather presents himself and his contemporaries as subjects of the *rex Francorum*, which was apparently considered sufficient to characterize their identity.[398] In the early middle ages political and administrative criteria became increasingly important for defining loyalties and identities. This was in line with the Roman tradition of determining group membership on

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[395] "Their polyethnic basis was, at least notionally, transformed into a singular ethnic identity, expressed in the name of the kingdom. Roman specialists not only helped with the task of governing. Often, they also constructed the ethnic discourse designed to stress the new political identities." (Pohl, "Introduction: Strategies of Distinction", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 3).

[396] Pohl, "Telling the Difference: Signs of Ethnic Identity", ibid. 64.

[397] Ibid. 67.

[398] "Close association with the king of the Franks may have meant that Romans would begin to identify themselves as Franks, and to be seen as Franks by others." (James, "Gregory of Tours and the Franks", *After Rome's Fall. Narrators and Sources of Early Medieval History*, Toronto *et al.* 1998, 59).

the basis of administrative structures.[399] The conceptualization of the population of Visigothic Spain as subjects of the king gained momentum especially in the second half of the 7th century; a case in point is the edict giving legal force to the *Liber Iudiciorum*.[400]

However, an alternative concept to the Gothic one emphasizes also religious phenomena. In one of the prologues to the *lex Salica*, which was written in the early Carolingian period, the *gens Francorum* is referred to as the chosen people, which is an indication that the religious factor had acquired increased importance by that time. According to Wood, the identification of the Franks with the chosen people in the age of Charlemagne is "the best case for religion having an extended impact on a kingdom's self-image".[401] However, the conviction of belonging to a chosen people is a common element of all "tribal legends" (*Stammessagen*).[402] It is important to note the transfer of such "tribal" traditions from the period of a more archaic social structure to more complex social and political communities such as territorial kingdoms and empires.[403] Several early medieval peoples such as the Irish, Anglo-Saxons, Franks and Visigoths regarded themselves as a "chosen people", even as a "New Israel".[404] However, only among the Visigoths

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[399] Jarnut, "Aspekte frühmittelalterlicher Ethnogenese in historischer Sicht", *Herrschaft und Ethnogenese im Frühmittelalter*, Münster 2002, 23 f.

[400] Claude, "Gentile und territoriale Staatsideen im Westgotenreich", *FMSt* 6 (1972), 31. This may be compared to the high medieval *fuero* of Aragon, where "the royal authority of the conquering king over his conquered Muslim subjects is invoked without any recourse to theological underpinnings" (Tolan, *Saracens. Islam in the Medieval European Imagination*, New York 2002, 178). A further case in point is the contemporary kingdom of Sicily under Frederick II; Klaus van Eickels points out that the community of Sicilian subjects was mainly constituted by its position under the authority of the king, who served as the main factor of integration uniting different religious and ethnic groups, using Norman traditions and those taken over from Roman law (communication by Prof. van Eickels from 13th January 2000). It is remarkable that the early medieval Lombard kingdom managed without a "national church", too, using other forms of integration; cf. Harrison, "The Lombards in the Early Carolingian Epoch", *Charlemagne and His Heritage*, Turnhout 1997, 139.

[401] Wood, "Conclusion: Strategies of Distinction", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 302. For the notion of the *gens Francorum* being founded by God see Werner, "Volk, Nation, Nationalismus, Masse: Mittelalter", *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* 7 (1992), 180 ff.

[402] Wolfram, "*Origo et Religio*", *EME* 3 (1994), 35.

[403] Pohl, "Introduction: Strategies of Distinction", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 5.

[404] "This identification of one's own *gens* with God's elect bound together the ruler and his people, however diverse its (ethnic) background." (de Jong, "Adding Insult to Injury: Julian of Toledo and his *Historia Wambae*", *The Visigoths. From the Migration*

did this "political theology" acquire a markedly anti-Jewish bias, which doubtlessly is at least partially due to the relatively small number of Jews living among the other peoples.[405]

In the ideal Christian society conceived of by Isidore the Jews as non-Christian Roman citizens were relegated to the position of a marginal group.[406] It is true that there had been similar tendencies in late Roman legislation.[407] Isidore's project should not be described as an attempt to achieve the definitive, all-embracing union of all subjects of the Gothic king; he clearly does not have the Jews in mind when sketching and pursuing his project of "nation-building". Isidore's argument is not only anti-Roman, but also anti-Jewish. He contributed to the process of "nation-building" insofar as he advocated and fostered the fusion of Goths and Romans; according to Claude the latest evidence for a particularistic, "ethnic" identity of the Goths dates from the last decade of Isidore's life, the 630s.[408] Anti-Jewish rhetoric became much sharper as the 7th century approached its end. Julian of Toledo uses much stronger language against Franks and Jews in his *historia Wambae*.[409] It is interesting to note that Julian replaces the anti-Byzantine argument favoured by Isidore by an anti-Frankish one, while at the same time retaining anti-Jewish polemics as the second pillar of Gothic identity.[410]

Period to the Seventh Century, Woodbridge 1999, 375). See also Werner, "Volk, Nation, Nationalismus, Masse: Mittelalter", *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* 7 (1992), 191 f.

[405] For the Spanish tradition of basing a "national" identity on specific religious parameters see *infra*, p. 317 ff.

[406] According to Geary the Jewish policies of Visigothic kings and councils resulted in a process of Jewish ethnogenesis, which was unique in its kind; cf. Geary, *The Myth of Nations*, Princeton/Oxford 2002, 134 f.

[407] A law enacted in 409 by Honorius (*CTh* XVI, 8, 19) stipulates: … *ne mysteriis Christianis inbuti perversitatem Iudaicam et alienam Romano imperio post Christianitatem cogantur arripere.*

[408] Claude, "Gentile und territoriale Staatsideen im Westgotenreich", *FMSt* 6 (1972), 37.

[409] *hist. Wamb.* V (CCL 115, 221).

[410] Teillet, *Des Goths à la nation gothique*, Paris 1984, 635: "Nationalisme gothique, hispanique et religieux … ces trois sentiments négatifs (anti-franc, anti-gaulois et anti-sémite), qui se sont substitués au caractère anti-romain de l'œuvre d'Isidore de Séville." The anti-Jewish factor in Isidore's thinking should, however, not be overlooked in this context. For a critique of Teillet's work (which is presented as a mostly decontextualized view of a seemingly "inevitable" process) see the review by Hillgarth, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 39 (1988), 578–581. See also de Jong, "Adding Insult to Injury: Julian of Toledo and his *Historia Wambae*", *The Visigoths. From the Migration Period to the Seventh Century*, Woodbridge 1999, 377 f. For Isidore's anti-Byzantine position in the *History of the Goths* see Hillgarth, "Historiography in Visigothic Spain", *La storiografia altomedievale. Settimane di studio* 17 (1970), 296 f.

In material and religious culture Goths and Christian Hispano-Romans became more and more similar in the 6th and 7th centuries; archaeological evidence suggests that in the 7th century there were no longer differences in material culture between the two groups.[411] The cancellation of the prohibition on mixed marriages by Leovigild was not sufficient to generate a conceptional and ideological bond between both parts of the Christian population; "this event cannot be converted into a myth or a symbol of unification."[412] The religious change of 589 provided a by far better opportunity to create a new myth of origin; the experience of collective conversion can even be regarded as an adaptation of earlier patterns of defining identities in the process of ethnogenesis by "change of cult and name".[413] Because the Goths looked back on a long history as a *gens Gothorum*, there was no need for them to change their name as well as their religion. In spite of that, the 3rd council of Toledo can be considered a "transition from the old to the new *origo et religio*".[414] The common *origo gentis* now allegedly uniting Goths and Romans could additionally be deduced also from their imagined common descent from Noah's son Japhet.[415] This argument could also contribute to the marginalization of the Jews whose descent was traced back not to Japhet, but to Sem.

The religious foundation of the new *gens Gothorum*, the styling of the *provincia Gothorum* as *patria Gothorum*[416] and the promotion of the triad *rex, gens et patria Gothorum* as a symbol of political and social identity relegated the Jews to the position of outsiders,[417] even though they

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[411] For the "growing unity of the various *gentes*" see Wood, "Social Relations in the Visigothic Kingdom from the Fifth to the Seventh Century", *The Visigoths from the Migration Period to the Seventh Century*, Woodbridge 1999, 193 and 205; Ripoll López, "Symbolic Life and Signs of Identity in Visigothic Times", ibid. 403–431. For a critical view of the so-called ethnic ascription approach see Kulikowski, "Nation versus Army: A Necessary Contrast?", *On Barbarian Identity*, Turnhout 2002, 73f.

[412] Ripoll López, "The Arrival of the Visigoths in Hispania: Population Problems and the Process of Acculturation", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 165.

[413] Wolfram, "*Origo et Religio*", *EME* 3 (1994), 22. See also id., "Die Goten als Gegenstand historischer Ethnographie", *Tradition als historische Kraft*, Berlin/New York 1982, 53–64.

[414] Wolfram, "*Origo et Religio*", *EME* 3 (1994), 24.

[415] *etym.* IX, 2, 26–29 (Reydellet, 55). On the origins of Goths and *Hispani* see Carlos Villamarín, *Las antigüedades de Hispania*, Spoleto 1996, 111–152.

[416] On the process of territorialization see Werner, "Volk, Nation, Nationalismus, Masse: Mittelalter", *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* 7 (1992), 217–220.

[417] For different wordings of the triad describing the "Staatsvolk" see VII Toledo, *c.* 1 (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 341): *gentem Gotorum vel patriam*

had been living on Spanish soil much longer than the Goths. Isidore's definition of *patria*, based on the community of those born on the territory, does not imply the necessary exclusion of the Jews.[418] Yet the tendency to regard the territory as the *patria* of the *gens Gothorum* and to promote the *gens* as the overriding category defining the identity of those in possession of that *patria* led to a gradual exclusion of all those who did not belong to the *gens*.[419]

Spanish territory was increasingly regarded as a unity, which is indicated by the rising use of *Hispania* in the singular in the 7th century.[420] It is not clear to what extent the Christian Roman population was already regarded as forming part of the *gens Gothorum*; Reccared's words at the 3rd council of Toledo suggest that the numerical strength of the *gens* cannot have been very great at that time.[421] It is possible that only members of the social elite were included in this case, since often only those belonging to the entourage of kings received ethnic labels.[422] How-

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aut regem; *genti Gotorum vel patriae aut principi*; ibid. 343: *refuga vel perfidus qui contra gentem Gotorum vel patriam seu regem* …; ibid. 345: *adversitate gentis aut patriae vel regiae potestatis*. For the language of IV Toledo see *c.* 75 (ibid. 248. 252 f.: *pro patriae gentisque Gotorum statu vel conservatione regiae salutis*; this phrase, apparently forming part of an oath, occurs twice in exactly the same wording). See also *Liber Iudiciorum* (*LV* II, 1, 8: *De his qui contra principem vel gentem aut patriam refugi sive insolentes existunt*; MGH, LL, I, 1, 53–57). For this triad see Claude, "Gentile und territoriale Staatsideen im Westgotenreich", *FMSt* 6 (1972), 14; Teillet, *Des Goths à la nation gothique*, Paris 1984, 449 f. 531. 535; Linehan, *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain*, Oxford 1993, 26; Eichenberger, *Patria. Studien zur Bedeutung des Wortes im Mittelalter (6.-12. Jhd.)*, Sigmaringen 1991, 71 ff.; Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville. Genèse et originalité de la culture hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*, Turnhout 2000, 375 f.; de Jong, "Adding Insult to Injury: Julian of Toledo and his *Historia Wambae*", *The Visigoths. From the Migration Period to the Seventh Century*, Woodbridge 1999, 379 and 383. For an only slightly different fourfold "core" of Gothic identity see Werner, "Volk, Nation, Nationalismus, Masse: Mittelalter", *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* 7 (1992), 195 note 62, who names king, *stirps regia*, nobility and the military as components of this "nulceus".

[418] *Patria … vocata quod communis sit omnium qui in ea nati sunt* (*etym.* XIV, 5, 19).

[419] On the development of the notion of *patria* among members of "Barbarian" *gentes* see Jarnut, "Aspekte frühmittelalterlicher Ethnogenese in historischer Sicht", *Herrschaft und Ethnogenese im Frühmittelalter*, Münster 2002, 23.

[420] See a law enacted by Egica (*LV* IX, 1, 21; MGH, LL, I, 1, 365): … *infra fines Spaniae*. In his *laus Spaniae* Isidore also talks of the *mater Spania* in the singular (*hist. praef.*: Rodríguez Alonso, 168).

[421] *Adest enim omnis gens Gotorum inclita* (*Regis professio fidei*: Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 57 f.).

[422] Geary, "Ethnic Identity as a Situational Construct in the Early Middle Ages", *Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien* 113 (1983), 15. For ethnogenesis on the basis of property ownership see id., *The Myth of Nations*, Princeton/Oxford 2002, 127 (Lombard Italy) and 133 (Visigothic Spain). See also Harrison, "The Lombards in the Early Carolingian Epoch", *Charlemagne and His Heritage*, Turnhout 1997, 131. 134; Pohl,

ever, ethnic terminology may refer to diverse circumstances, so that its meaning has to be determined by an analysis of the context of each occurrence.[423] Unlike Reccared at the council of 589, Isidore seems to use a wider definition of "Gothic" when he talks of "all the peoples of the entire Gothic nation" in his *History of the Goths*, referring to Reccared's initiation of the conversion.[424] This may imply that the use of the term had been extended in the meantime; such an extension would be in keeping with Isidore's inclination to unite the Christian inhabitants of the realm on the basis of Catholic Christianity and membership of the *gens Gothorum*.[425]

It is extremely difficult to assess the relative importance of the Jewish and the Gothic part of the population in the 7th century, not only because of the generally problematic issue of numbers in antiquity, but also because of the changing definition of who was Gothic; stark regional variation has to be taken into account, too. At least at the beginning of the Gothic settlement, during the kingdom of Toulouse, Jews must have been more numerous in Spain than Goths. One may speculate that the Goths only attained the relative majority after their conversion to Catholicism, after the (theoretical) integration of the

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"Goten", *RGA* 12 (1998), 439 (on the social, ethnic and territorial aspects of "ethnic" terms) and Olberg, *Die Bezeichnungen für soziale Stände, Schichten und Gruppen in den Leges Barbarorum*, Berlin/New York 1991. For Visigothic social groups see González-Cobos Dávila, "Las clases sociales en la sociedad visigótica y el III concilio de Toledo", *Concilio III de Toledo. XIV centenario 589–1989*, Toledo 1991, 411–426. For "Adelsnationen" ruling over ethnically heterogeneous populations see Koselleck, "Einleitung: Volk, Nation, Nationalismus, Masse", *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* 7 (1992), 145. For the representation of a *populus* by a secular and clerical nobility cf. Werner, "Volk, Nation, Nationalismus, Masse: Mittelalter", ibid. 184 and 204f.; for the identification of *populus* and nobility ibid. 215. This restrictive concept was also taken up by Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada in the 13th century, when he identified the "Gothic people" with the ruling political elite; cf. Derek W. Lomax, "Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada como historiador", *Actas del Quinto Congreso Internacional de Hispanistas*, ed. Maxime Chevalier *et al.*, Bordeaux 1977, 588.

[423] Wood, "Conclusion: Strategies of Distinction", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 299. See also Wolfram, "*Origo et Religio*", *EME* 3 (1994), 20 and James, "Gregory of Tours and the Franks", *After Rome's Fall. Narrators and Sources of Early Medieval History*, Toronto *et al.* 1998, 59.

[424] *hist.* 52 (*totius Gothicae gentis populos*: Rodríguez Alonso, 260; Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 102).

[425] But the use of ethnic terminology should be analyzed with caution: "… any schematic answer would miss the point. One was a Goth, or a Frank, in the full sense as long as one maintained direct participation in the affairs of the *gens*." (Pohl, "Introduction: Strategies of Distinction", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 4).

Christian Hispano-Romans into their *gens*. It is, however, unsafe to say without further qualification that Goths and Romans were "the two largest groups within the population".[426]

An analysis of the treatise *de fide catholica* confirms Isidore's special attachment to the term *gens*, which he uses with a specific theological connotation, as opposed to the more neutral *populus*.[427] In one passage he refers to the Jews as *populi*, whereas the Romans are called *gentes*.[428] The latter term is used only with reference to the "gentiles", as opposed to the "old" people of God, the Jews, who are never referred to as being a *gens*. In Isidore's view the transition of salvation from Jews to gentiles corresponds to the shift of political emphasis from the *populus Romanus* of antiquity to the formerly "Barbarian" *gentes*, who are said to have persecuted Christians and to have endangered the Roman empire during the first Christian centuries[429] but who have now attained a positive mission within the economy of salvation: the present church is an *ecclesia gentium*.[430] From this perspective it is impossible to give the Jews the status of *gens* or to integrate them into to the larger, "higher" community of *gentes*. This would require their prior conversion to Christianity, i.e. the refutation of their Jewish identity and their incorporation into one of the existing, by now territorialized *gentes*;[431] this is conceived of as the only way to accept the Jews into the community of *gentes* which constitutes Isidore's early medieval world. The only way open to "Visigothic"

[426] Ripoll López, "The Arrival of the Visigoths in Hispania: Population Problems and the Process of Acculturation", ibid. 179.

[427] Since John of Biclaro the phrase *gens Gothorum* had been used as an umbrella term for several *populi*; cf. Teillet, *Des Goths à la nation gothique*, Paris 1984, 552 ff.

[428] *fid. cath.* I, 19, 1 (PL 83, 477), an interpretation of Ps. 2, 1. Isidore interprets Dan. 7, 14 in such a way that *omnes populi* appears as the all-encompassing community, while the Hebrew parallelism *tribus et linguae* is understood as referring to two subcategories: *Quae tribus, nisi Hebraeorum populus? Quae linguae, nisi gentium nationes?* (*fid. cath.* II, 3, 7; PL 83, 507). Also Fredegar reckons the Romans as one *gens* among others in a world composed out of different *gentes*; cf. Pohl, "Gentilismus", *RGA* 11 (1998), 91.

[429] *all.* 143. 152 (PL 83, 118). For the difference of Roman *populus* (ruling the *urbs* or the empire) and "Barbarian" *gentes* or *nationes* see Koselleck, "Einleitung: Volk, Nation, Nationalismus, Masse", *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* 7 (1992), 146 and Gschnitzer, "Volk, Nation, Nationalismus, Masse: Altertum", ibid. 167 f.

[430] *all.* 170 (PL 83, 121): … *eadem gentium Ecclesia est, quae in quatuor mundi partibus diffunditur.*

[431] On the territorialization of the Visigothic kingdom see Claude, "Gentile und territoriale Staatsideen im Westgotenreich", *FMSt* 6 (1972), 1–38 and Pohl, "Gentilismus", *RGA* 11 (1998), 94.

Jews is their incorporation into the *gens Gothorum*, but Isidore stops short of advocating active mission among them.[432]

Because he regarded the Roman empire as being infested with heresy, Isidore considered the Gothic people as the standard bearer of Catholic orthodoxy; the *gens Gothorum* had succeeded the Romans both on the political and on the religious level. In his writings he treated the Roman empire and the *regnum Gothorum* on equal terms.[433] The integration of Catholic Hispano-Romans into the *gens Gothorum* accelerated the gradual dissolution of the older model of Roman identity, contributing to the decreasing importance of the concept of Roman citizenship. The latter had developed into an all-inclusive concept for the free male population during the empire; because of its universal character it comprised very different levels. According to Noethlichs, one of the main elements of Roman identity before the 4th century was "a certain conscience of culture" (*Kulturbewußtsein*) and the sense of being part of a community distinct from the Barbarians outside the empire. The identity of a Roman citizen was complemented by the regional origin of a person (*domus, origo*). After the *constitutio Antoniniana* of 212 A.D. such multifaceted identities became the rule for all free inhabitants of the empire.[434] Liebeschuetz points out that Roman identity was more and more depoliticized, being increasingly determined by cultural factors, at least among the upper classes.[435] Membership of certain groups of higher social status became more important than universal Roman citizenship.

Thus, social and cultural elements provided benefits of distinction which were essential for the self-perception of the ruling elite. After the disintegration of the empire the universal framework of such multiple "Roman" identities disappeared; in the Visigothic kingdom it was replaced—at least officially—by the profession of Catholic faith which constituted the determining factor of the new *gens Gothorum*. This was unparalleled in Roman tradition which did not know any cultural or

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[432] For Isidore baptism is tantamount to giving up Jewish identity: *Post fidem dici iam non potest Iudaeus* (*etym*. VIII, 10, 4).

[433] *vir. ill*. XXII (Codoñer, 146): … *temporibus illis, quibus Iustinianus in re publica et Athanagildus in Hispaniis imperium tenuere*.

[434] For different concepts of integration in the Roman empire see Noethlichs, *Das Judentum und der römische Staat*, Darmstadt 1996, 39–43. Since the *Lex Plautia Papiria* of 89 B.C. Roman citizenship could be combined with other citizenships.

[435] For the decreasing importance of Roman citizenship in late antiquity see Liebeschuetz, "Citizen Status and Law in the Roman Empire and the Visigothic Kingdom", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al*. 1998, 135f.

religious concept of "integration", only a legal one. After 212 "integration" was reduced to loyalty to emperor and empire.[436] However, in the 4th century two classes of citizens began to emerge, opposing orthodox Christians and "dissenters", i.e. heretics and heterodox believers of any kind.[437] Orthodoxy gradually replaced Roman citizenship as the distinguishing mark between "elite" and citizens of lower status.[438]

When the Goths converted to Catholicism, the identity of Hispano-Romans as Roman citizens soon lost the rest of its remaining significance. The senatorial class had already started to disintegrate before that time. Senatorial rank had often been given as a reward for imperial service. When that option disappeared after the demise of the empire in the west, people wanting to climb the social ladder had to look for alternatives which could provide them with benefits of distinction. One option was the service of Barbarian kings and the honour which could be gained that way;[439] Roman citizenship was not important in that connection. The common service Goths and Hispano-Romans performed for the Gothic king laid the basis for the emergence of a new, non-Roman identity. But royal service and landownership were apparently not considered sufficient, making it necessary to buttress that identity with a religious foundation.[440] At the same time both free and unfree people were increasingly referred to as "clients",[441] which made the Roman citizenship of the free largely superfluous in terms of honour and social status.

Isidore of Seville contributed to this development by considering the whole Christian population as constituting the *gens Gothorum*;[442] this terminology reflected the adoption of the formerly "Barbarian", gentile

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[436] Noethlichs, *Das Judentum und der römische Staat*, Darmstadt 1996, 136.

[437] *CTh* XVI, 1, 2 (a law from 380); it is telling that precisely this law was put at the beginning of Justinian's code (*CJ* I, 1, 1).

[438] Van Engen, "Christening the Romans", *Traditio* 52 (1997), 45. "Christening cast all others into a single non-Christian category, the new equivalent of the Greek and Roman 'Barbarian'." (Ibid. 43).

[439] Jarnut, "Aspekte des Kontinuitätsproblems in der Völkerwanderungszeit", *Herrschaft und Ethnogenese im Frühmittelalter*, Münster 2002, 16, on the inversion of the direction of integration: While formerly "Barbarians" had wanted to become Romans, now members of the provincial elites wanted to become part of the *gentes*. On provincial Romans propagating notions of a "Gothic" community see Pohl, "Goten", *RGA* 12 (1998), 439.

[440] Heather, *The Goths*, Oxford and Cambridge/Mass. 1996, 211.

[441] Ibid. 287.

[442] Drews, "Goten und Römer als Gegenstand der Historiographie bei Isidor von Sevilla", *Saeculum* 53 (2002), 17.

perspective by a member of the Hispano-Roman aristocracy, who had abandoned the universal Roman model of late antiquity. Roman identity became meaningless at a time when the Byzantines were regarded as heretics and the *vocatio omnium gentium* assigned a positive function within the economy of salvation to the "Barbarians", who were now in control of former Roman territory.[443] From that perspective, the welding together of Goths and Christian Hispano-Romans in a new *gens Gothorum* could appear as an event in accordance with God's ordination, implying, however, the exclusion of the Jews. Isidore's point of view is completely determined by the Gothic perspective; all enemies of the Goths are preceived just as such,[444] and also the Jews are presented mainly in negative terms, as opponents of the Goths from the perspective of salvation history.

When the Christian Hispano-Romans were integrated into the Gothic people, the Jews remained as a Roman "remnant", which retained Roman citizenship without being included in the new political and religious concept of "nation" (*gens*).[445] The status of the Jews as Roman citizens had been recognized in the Breviary of Alaric II,[446] but this situation changed after the conversion of the Goths to Catholicism: "At a period in which the local kingdoms were aspiring to achieve complete integration between Barbarians and Romans, it was no longer practical to continue to maintain Roman citizenship solely for the benefit of the Jews."[447] Between 589 and 654, when the category of Roman citizenship finally disappeared, the legal status of the Jews remained unclear. This was precisely the period during which Sisebut ordered collective baptisms and Isidore wrote all of his works. Gregory the

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[443] Fritze, "*Universalis gentium confessio*. Formeln, Träger und Wege universalmissionarischen Denkens im 7. Jahrhundert", *FMSt* 3 (1969), 128 ("Völker als Heilsmittler"). Christ's call to missionize among the nations (Mt. 28, 19) is mentioned twice in the treatise *de fide catholica* (II, 1, 13; II, 24, 4); for references in Isidore's other works see Carpin, *Il battesimo in Isidoro di Siviglia*, Bologna 1984, 133 note 307.

[444] Angenendt, *Das Frühmittelalter*, Stuttgart *et al.* ²1995, 166.

[445] Unlike Hispano-Romans, who are never referred to as a particular *gens* in Visigothic sources from the 7ᵗʰ century, the Jews do receive the label *gens* in a source dating from 653 (VIII Toledo, *c.* 12; Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 433).

[446] *LRV* II, 1, 10 (Haenel, 34): *Iudaei omnes, qui Romani esse noscuntur.*

[447] Rabello, "The Legal Condition of the Jews in the Roman Empire", *ANRW* II/13, Berlin/New York 1980, 728f. Rabello points out that Ostrogoths and Lombards recognized the Roman citizenship of Jews, too. See also id., "La conversione di Reccaredo al cattolicesimo (587) e le sue ripercussioni sulla condizione giuridica degli Ebrei", *Index* 12 (1983/84), 377–390, and García Gallo, "El bautismo y la capacidad jurídica en la época visigoda", *Estudios de derecho privado y penal romano, feudal y burgués*, Barcelona 1988, 83–89.

Great had praised Reccared for excluding all heretics from the Gothic people, the standard-bearer of the kingdom.[448] Even though the Jews are not mentioned in this context, the question of the legal position of Jewish Roman citizens was clearly in the air.

From Isidore's perspective, both Romans (Byzantines) and Jews were particularistic groups; unlike the former the latter did not possess a territory of their own; this may be an additional reason why he does not accord the Jews the status of a *gens*.[449] The reconceptualization of Gothic identity was based on the opposition of the Goths to these two groups, which embodied a conflicting political and religious claim. The rejection of Byzantine claims may have gone back to the possible disappointment of Catholic Hispano-Romans at the failure of the emperor to support them during Hermenegild's rebellion. Afterwards, the Visigothic church styled itself as the champion of orthodoxy, in opposition to both Arians and "Monophysite" critics of the three chapters.[450] Unlike the Byzantines, the Jews lived among the Visigoths; in addition, there was a long tradition of religious controversy Isidore (and other ecclesiastical authors) could rely on.

The scope given to the refutation of the "Monophysite", "Byzantine" heresy at the 2nd council of Seville is a clear indication that Isidore defined the orthodox, Catholic position also in opposition to Roman and Byzantine claims. His repeated references to the alleged heterodoxy of Byzantine emperors in his historiographical works point into the same direction. Yet the theological controversy with the Byzantines receives far less attention than the anti-Jewish argument; this is due not only to the much longer Christian tradition of conducting arguments against Jews than against christological heretics, but also to the role of anti-Jewish argument for defending and upholding Gothic identity in the wake of Sisebut's policies. The latter had put Catholic faith into serious danger by creating the problem of "unreliable" new Christians who threatened the inner cohesion of Catholic Gothic society.

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[448] *dial.* III, 31, 7 (SC 260, 388).

[449] After the controversy of the three chapters Latin Christians increasingly regarded the "Greeks" as one *gens* among others; cf. Amory, *People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy*, Cambridge 1997, 232.

[450] For the rejection of the Byzantines at the 3rd council of Toledo cf. Vilella Masana, "Gregorio Magno e Hispania", *Gregorio Magno e il suo tempo*, Rome 1991, 176 and 184; id., "Hispania durante la época del III concilio de Toledo según Gregorio Magno", *Concilio III de Toledo. XIV centenario 589–1989*, Toledo 1991, 485–494.

In order to strengthen the new Gothic community, Isidore provided an exegetical exposition of basic Catholic doctrine in his treatise *de fide catholica*. He regarded the Jews as a backdrop of Christian identity and theology; an argument against them was meant to generate benefits of distinction necessary to buttress Gothic identity, relegating them into the inferior position as witnesses to Catholic faith and truth. The Jews were therefore necessary as a negative foil on the verge of society. Isidore avoided aggressive anti-Jewish words, his argument is a retarding element which can be read as implicit criticism of any deviation from traditional policies regarding the Jews. Anti-Jewish argument serves only to construct and endorse Catholic self-perception but not to advocate anti-Jewish political action. At this point Isidore is much closer to Augustine than to Ambrose or John Chrysostom.

The ideological perception of the collective conversion of the Goths as a new myth of origin of the *gens Gothorum* turned Catholic Christianity into its distinguishing mark, while at the same time the ethnic label *Gothus* served to separate it from other Catholic peoples. From this perspective, both *Iudaeus* and *Romanus* became anachronistic concepts which could not be accomodated to the early medieval, regional and "proto-national" horizon. Isidore wrote his works to refute the claims of both Byzantines (Romans) and Jews; the Goths were to appear as the political and spiritual heirs of these two major (political and religious) forces of ancient civilization. In his historiographical works he tried to substantiate the Gothic claim to the greatest possible antiquity, which reinforced the allegation that the Goths had replaced their rivals.[451] Gothic splendour was all the more brilliant as Isidore succeeded in delegitimizing the conflicting claims of Jews and Romans.[452] The profession of Catholic faith acquired a political dimension, constituting a symbol of Gothic identity and an ideological basis for membership of the ruling elite. The loss of the originally universal perspective of Chris-

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[451] Drews, "Goten und Römer als Gegenstand der Historiographie bei Isidor von Sevilla", *Saeculum* 53 (2002), 6–9. For Isidore's reports on Gothic victories won against the Franks in 541 and 589 cf. Fontaine, "King Sisebut's *Vita Desiderii* and the Political Function of Visigothic Hagiography", *Visigothic Spain. New Approaches*, Oxford 1980, 124.

[452] Already Augustine had warned that political power and earthly dominion could go over to the gentiles; cf. *civ. Dei* XVIII, 27–44; see also Prosper of Aquitaine's *de vocatione omnium gentium* (5th century). Cf. Heinzelmann, "Die Funktion des Wunders in der spätantiken und frühmittelalterlichen Historiographie", *Mirakel im Mittelalter. Konzeptionen, Erscheinungsformen, Deutungen*, Stuttgart 2002, 43.

tianity in the wake of the break-up of the ancient *oikoumenē* made it possible to identify Catholic faith with the political interests of Gothic particularism. The resulting political theology illustrates the reversal of a development in the history of religion, the change from the pattern of a universal religion to that of a "national" one.[453]

Isidore's literary works were meant to lay and reinforce the foundations of the Catholic Visigothic kingdom. In his activities as bishop of Seville and metropolitan of the *Baetica* he focussed on church discipline and inner-Christian dissidents; the latter are much less prominent in his theological works, which aimed at consolidating the unity of the state church. Catholic faith was sharply distinguished not so much from heretics but from the Jews as the most important "out-group" of society. This project was made easier by the fact that the Arian church had possessed no elaborate dogmatic foundation and no tradition of philosophical reflection of its faith.[454] The integration of Goths and Christian Hispano-Romans was facilitated by the kind of second conversion the latter experienced after 589, putting an end to one and a half centuries of Catholic existence under Arian rule.[455] The period after 589 was marked by a return to missionary zeal turned inwards.[456] Unlike the Arians, who were unable to resist the Catholic advance because of their own theological weakness, the Jews were well prepared to stand up to Catholic mission and to all attempts to include them in a religiously defined Catholic "nation".[457]

The structure of Isidore's treatise *de fide catholica* is not only due to theological and dogmatic considerations but very much conditioned by political interests. It does not need to be a reaction against Sisebut's decree of forced baptisms, although this is possible; it is much more a consequence of the redefinition of Gothic identity initiated at the 3rd council of Toledo, the replacement of the *lex Gothica* by the *fides catholica*. When referring to Spain, already Gregory of Tours had used *Romanus* and *catholicus* as synonyms, obviously leaving out the Jews (who, it has to

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[453] Goldammer, "Politik und Religion", *RGG* 5 (1961), 444.

[454] Fontaine, "Conversion et culture chez les wisigoths d'Espagne", *La conversione al cristianesimo nell'Europa dell'alto medioevo. Settimane di studio* 14 (1967), 103. 122 f.

[455] For the "seconde conversion des Hispano-Romains" see ibid. 146.

[456] Fontaine (ibid. 147) talks of "un élan nouveau … une sorte de nouvelle jeunesse missionnaire."

[457] For the cultural level of Spanish Judaism see the discussion of the probable knowledge of rabbinic literature *supra*, p. 120–124. Also the theological argument described in the letter of Severus of Minorca should be recalled (cf. *supra*, p. 250 f.).

be admitted, play no part in the hagiographic context).[458] It is unclear whether this identification is due to reports of Visigothic envoys often mentioned by Gregory in other contexts.[459] This model was adapted after 589, replacing *Romanus* by *Gothus*. This transition was facilitated by the gradual weakening of the ancient notion of the mediterranean *oikoumenē* which had still been alive in 6th-century Italy.[460] *Catholicus* was no longer understood in the original sense of "universal", comprising all Christians throughout the *orbis terrarum*; the term was restricted to a provincial, regional, "proto-national" level, integrating the Christian population of a precise territory.

The rejection of the "heretical" Byzantines made it possible for the Goths to appropriate catholicity and to style themselves as champions of orthodoxy. Visigothic theologians failed to elaborate on the theory of Jewish witness for Gothic Catholic society; yet there was hardly time for that following Sisebut's decree of forced baptism, since theoretically there were no Jews left who could have possibly testified to Christian truth; instead they were required to embrace that very truth themselves. An all-inclusive and aggressively propagated concept of identity threatened the very basis of that identity on the long run because it needed an out-group against which its own self-image could be projected. When the Jews as the most important internal out-group had theoretically disappeared, the conflict erupted within the Gothic Catholic community itself.

The so-called Isidorian educational programme was meant to provide members of the new *gens Gothorum* with ideas, norms and values based on a concept of a Christian *res publica*. Jews were seen "as a disintegrating element, on the margins of Christian society,"[461] but still not excluded from it. Isidore abstained from integrating the Jews into his concept of a Catholic Gothic people; he may have realized that this would lead to an implosion of the whole concept. It was much more convenient and also in line with tradition to give the Jews a subservient role on the verge of society, adapting the Augustinian model. Isidore's failure to elaborate on the role of the Jews as witnesses may be due

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[458] *Gloria martyrum* 78f. (MGH, SRM, I, 2, 91; Van Dam, *Glory of the Martyrs*, Liverpool 1988, 102f.).

[459] Claude, "Die diplomatischen Beziehungen zwischen dem Westgotenreich und Ostrom (475–615)", *MIÖG* 104 (1996), 17 note 30.

[460] Amory, *People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy*, Cambridge 1997, 217–227.

[461] González Salinero, "Catholic Anti-Judaism in Visigothic Spain", *The Visigoths. Studies in Culture and Society*, Leiden *et al.* 1999, 124.

to the fact that after Sisebut's actions theoretically no Jews were left at all. On the other hand he also failed to answer the question of how the endemic "problem" of "unreliable" new Christians could be solved. His concept of Gothic identity in fact needed the Jews as a backdrop, and their theoretical disappearance left a void which could not be filled by other groups. Perhaps for this reason Jews are hardly ever mentioned in the *sententiae* where Isidore sketches his model of Christian society.

The increasing radicalization of anti-Jewish rhetoric in legislation and theological literature after his death can also be blamed on Isidore's failure to highlight the position of the Jews in his concept of Christian society. This may be compared to Gregory of Tours, who also failed to explain the relationship between society and its margins.[462] Isidore sticks to the model provided by his elder brother and predecessor who had extolled the unity of Goths and Romans in his sermon at the 3rd council of Toledo, but without advocating the inclusion of the Jews into the ruling *gens Gothorum*. Thus the final (re)unification of God's people was left to the eschatological period of the heavenly kingdom.

Several factors in Isidore's thinking contributed to a weakening of the position accorded to the Jews on the verge of society. His conceptualization of kingship was determined by religious, but not by territorial criteria.[463] Isidore's programme for Visigothic society was based on a concept of political theology, investing Christianity with the paramount role of a *corpus Christi mysticum*.[464] The king is no mere *rex gentis* but head of the community of the faithful.[465] Ultimately, Isidore failed to harmonize this concept with the notion of the Jews as a marginalized group existing on the verge of society. When developing his concept of Christian kingship he did not elaborate on the ruler's power

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[462] "Although marginalised groups such as Arians and Jews appear in the *Histories*, Gregory's main interest lies not in exploring their marginality nor in developing their relationship with mainstream society." (Keely, "Arians and Jews in the *Histories* of Gregory of Tours", *JMH* 23, 1997, 114).

[463] *sent.* III, 49, 3 (CCL 111, 300f.). See Reydellet, *La Royauté dans la littérature latine de Sidoine Apollinaire à Isidore de Séville*, Rome 1981, 567f. For territorial concepts of kingship in the second half of the century see Claude, "Gentile und territoriale Staatsideen im Westgotenreich", *FMSt* 6 (1972), 24–27.

[464] Reydellet, *La Royauté dans la littérature latine de Sidoine Apollinaire à Isidore de Séville*, Rome 1981, 572: "… le point de vue d'Isidore est proprement théologique … Il crée une politique chrétienne." For the political dimension of anti-Jewish literature in Byzantium cf. Olster, *Roman Defeat, Christian Response, and the Literary Construction of the Jew*, Philadelphia 1994, 21.

[465] For Isidore's parallelization of the offices of king and bishop cf. Reydellet, *La Royauté dans la littérature latine de Sidoine Apollinaire à Isidore de Séville*, Rome 1981, 592.

over the non-Christian population. Only after comparing various statements made in different works does the basically undefined and unclear position he accords to the Jews become apparent. This theoretical (and also practical) weakness may be due to the rapid changes experienced by Visigothic society after 589, which produced phenomena of "non-simultaneity" (Ernst Bloch).[466] This unclear picture emerging from Isidore's works must be compared to the imprecise legal condition of the Jews who were increasingly burdened with legal restrictions in everyday life, being even forced to regard themselves as Christians, but who were on the other hand still in possession of Roman citizenship and who could even rely on occasional help from Christian neighbours and patrons.

The continual repetition of anti-Jewish laws is an indication that the legal norms were not immediately put into practice. In fact, one may get the impression that certain kings tried to demonstrate their own orthodoxy by generating an array of anti-Jewish laws and rhetoric which could have been intended as evidence of their ability to fulfill their duty as kings. Seen from that perspective, the laws had a more declaratory function as symbols of orthodoxy and eligibility, entailing, of course, also dire consequences for the Jews who had to suffer the consequences, even if occasionally these fell short of the full extent suggested by hostile rhetoric.[467] The obvious contradictions between some of the laws suggest that the legislator did not think through all his measures;[468] those kings who continued to enact anti-Jewish laws seem to have wanted to keep on denigrating the Jews verbally, which in the

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[466] Reydellet, ibid. 604: "La rapidité de l'évolution à partir de Liuvigild et de Reccarède explique d'une part l'enthousiasme de la renaissance isidorienne et en même temps le bouillonnement d'idées contradictoires." In marked contrast to Isidore's language and thinking, the fathers of the 8th council of Toledo (653) rejected the notion of Jewish witness, questioning the very right of the Jews to live within Christian society (c. 12; Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 434). The Jews are even implicitly compared to filth, which brings in the important element of purification; on the latter aspect see de Jong in the final discussion in *The Visigoths. From the Migration Period to the Seventh Century*. Woodbridge 1999, 506. For the concept of "non-simultaneity" see Ernst Bloch, "Gleichzeitigkeit und Ungleichzeitigkeit, philosophisch", *Erbschaft dieser Zeit*, Frankfurt/M. 1973 (1935), 111–126.

[467] This was still different under Sisebut, who cannot be credited with pursuing merely a rhetorical agenda: … *huius legis prolatam sententiam a nemine temerari posse credamus.* His second anti-Jewish law ends with a curse against everybody who would fail to abide by it (*LV* XII, 2, 14; MGH, LL, I, 1, 422f.).

[468] Juster, "The Legal Condition of the Jews under the Visigothic Kings", *Israel Law Review* 11 (1976), 274 note 55 and 567, note 193.

final analysis amounted to a form of "cumulative radicalization". The anti-Jewish laws passed soon after Isidore's death and the return to the policy of forced baptisms under King Chintila show that the principles adopted by the 4th council of Toledo and maintained in Isidore's works remained without practical consequences.

His lack of clarity concerning the position of the Jews in Christian society paved the way for later anti-Jewish legislation. Regarding the Jews, Isidore was content to repeat traditional patristic concepts and ideas; he was unable to go beyond these limits and complete his concept of Christian society by a viable and positive perspective for non-Christian, more especially Jewish inhabitants, which would have been in accordance with the patristic and biblical notions maintained in his theological works. He did not solve the contradiction between the conservative tendency of his theological works, including *de fide catholica*, and his more innovative notion of a Christian society developed in the *sententiae*. By covering up possible theological (christological) differences inside Christian society on the one hand and by promoting a negative image of Judaism as an opponent and antithesis of that society on the other he prepared the ground for anti-Jewish measures, even though he criticized forced baptisms in his *History of the Goths* and at the 4th Toledan council.

It must be recalled that the great number of anti-Jewish measures initiated by ecclesiastical and political authorities is not matched by evidence of anti-Jewish attitudes among the Visigothic population; on the contrary, illegal support offered to Jews is repeatedly sanctioned with legal punishment.[469] Already the fathers of the council of Elvira complained of excessively close contacts between Christians and Jews allegedly prevailing at the beginning of the 4th century, still in the pre-Constantinian period. Also the letter by Severus of Minorca testifies to their high social standing in local society, which the Jews were able to preserve even after their forced baptism.[470] In the second half of the 6th century bishop Masona of Mérida founded a hospital which offered treatment to Christians and Jews.[471] It seems that in the 7th century Jews were still integrated into society on a local level; they continued to have

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[469] *c.* 58 of IV Toledo (Martínez Díez/Rodríguez, La colección canónica V, 236): *Multi quippe hucusque ex sacerdotibus atque laicis accipientes a Iudaeis munera perfidiam eorum patrocinio suo fovebant.*

[470] *ep. Sev.* 5, 1; 6, 3 (Bradbury, 84); cf. Lotter, "Zur sozialen Hierarchie der Judenheit in Spätantike und Frühmittelalter", *Aschkenas* 13 (2003), 336.

[471] *VPE* V, 3 (CCL 116, 50; Fear, *Lives of the Visigothic Fathers*, 74 f.).

contact with neighbours and patrons[472] as well as with fellow Jews, as indicated by the *placita* of Toledo. In view of the numerous frictions and conflicts within society at large support from Jews could be a valuable asset.[473] Social reality was quite different from Isidore's ideal of a Christian society based on the concept of a new, Catholic and Gothic identity. His project had precisely been meant to overcome differences within the Christian population by constructing a particular image of the past, silencing inner-Christian ruptures and tensions, while at the same time promoting and highlighting other differences, especially with regard to the Jews.

Isidore's expectation that the Jews would convert at the end of time is clearly in line with patristic thinking, which is in stark contrast to the position adopted by Agobard and Amolo of Lyons in the 9th century, who advocated active mission among contemporary Jews, and this not only with peaceful means.[474] Unlike Isidore, both authors make practical claims concerning the present; they demand a deterioration of the legal position of the Jews and their exclusion from certain sectors of public life. In this endeavour they could rely on just very few Visigothic literary texts but on quite a number of legal sources from early medieval Spain.[475] By contrast, Isidore combined his concept of a new, Catholic Visigothic kingdom with a conventional view of Judaism which—although marginalized—still occupied a position on the verge of Christian society as an alleged witness to Christian truth. He did not contribute to a radicalization of the Christian attitude towards the Jews, but he did hand down ancient anti-Jewish stereotypes to the European middle ages.[476] Although he was not in favour of forced baptisms, which were the source of renewed religious and now inner-Christian tension,

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[472] For the protection of Jews by Christian laypeople and clergy see *LV* XII, 3, 19–24; this is an indication that Jews continued to form part of vertical social groups constituted by relations of patronage. For the latter—without discussion of possible Jewish membership—see García Moreno, "Legitimate and Illegitimate Violence in Visigothic Law", *Violence and Society in the Early Medieval West*, Woodbridge 1998, 46–59.

[473] Heather, *The Goths*, Oxford and Cambridge/Mass. 1996, 290.

[474] Albert, "Adversus Iudaeos in the Carolingian Empire", *Contra Iudaeos. Ancient and Medieval Polemics between Christians and Jews*, Tübingen 1996, 137.

[475] Ibid. 138–142. For the legal marginalization of Jews in Visigothic Spain see González Salinero, *Las conversiones forzosas de los judíos en el reino visigodo*, Rome 2000, 99–110.

[476] On this point he can be compared to Augustine; cf. Stroumsa, "From Anti-Judaism to Antisemitism in Early Christianity?", *Contra Iudaeos. Ancient and Medieval Polemics between Christians and Jews*, Tübingen 1996, 16 and 22. For the dynamic radicalization of anti-Jewish positions in the early church see ibid., 9 and 17.

he approvingly acquiesced in their results. By including traditional anti-Jewish notions in his "educational programme" he paved the way for further anti-Jewish legislation.[477] The continual repetition of these laws is an indication of the failure of Isidore's concept of a Christian community which would have been both inclusive (as regards Christians) and exclusive (regarding the Jews); his project of uniting Goths and Christian Hispano-Romans in the new *gens Gothorum* was ultimately unable to provide Visigothic society with a sufficiently stable basis.

Unlike Augustine, Isidore does not argue against heretics in his literary works. Following 1 Cor. 11, 19 ("no doubt there have to be differences among you [*oportet et haereses esse*] to show which of you have God's approval"), Augustine had highlighted the benefit of anti-heretical argument for theological reflection and for the justification of Catholic faith.[478] It is interesting to note that he failed to include anti-Jewish argument in this beneficial theological polemics, only mentioning heretics as enemies of the church. It is significant that Isidore does not take up this notion at all. His reluctance to discuss divergent Christian teaching may be due to his position inside the ruling elite of the Visigothic kingdom; much more than the bishop of provincial Hippo, Isidore belonged to the political establishment of his time; therefore his principal social aim was to strengthen the coherence and identity of all Christians living in Visigothic Spain in order to foster political unity.[479] From this perspective, divergent opinions did not appear as useful but as threatening; this sense of danger was more due to political apprehensions than to theological anxieties. For political reasons Isidore declined to mention and argue against any possible Spanish heresies of his time, covering up more especially the Arian past of the Goths, which is only mentioned in his historiographical writings but not in his theological works.

It is remarkable that his only recorded argument against a heretic, conducted at the 2nd council of Seville, was directed against a foreigner,

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[477] "… the Jews, first hit by theological discourse, soon afterwards by disenfranchising laws and, from time to time, subject to blatantly violent attacks on their persons or property." (Stroumsa, ibid. 12, on John Chrysostom and the Jews of Antioch).

[478] *civ. Dei* XVI, 2; XVIII, 51 (CCL 48, 499. 649f.).

[479] The ideal of unity was, however, never achieved in practice. Precisely for this reason Isidore wished to lay a spiritual basis for a Gothic and Catholic society in his works. Heather (*The Goths*, Oxford and Cambridge/Mass. 1996, 282f. and 305) is perhaps a little too optimistic about the practical realization of the unitarian ideals.

a Syrian "Monophysite", but not against a local dissenter.[480] His foreign opponent was politically "safe" since he could not appear as an exponent of internal divisions in spiritual (and political) matters touching upon the identity of the Gothic people; moreover, Isidore may have felt actually threatened by the presence of a heretical bishop in his own diocese.[481] When the unity of Catholic faith was promoted as the basis for the new Gothic self-image, the Jews unwillingly "advanced" to the status of the most important "out-group" embodying religious and political dissent.[482] In *de fide catholica* Isidore does not elaborate on the political implications of his anti-Jewish argument, but he provides the exegetical and ideological foundation for a society conceptualized as a community both Gothic and Catholic.

Augustine had remarked that the Jews were the only group in the Roman empire not assimilated by the victors; only the Jews kept their separate identity.[483] Isidore takes up this line of thought, interpreting Jewish law and circumcision as distinguishing marks.[484] He takes God's promise to Cain (Gen. 4, 15) as justification for the existence of the Jews in the present, in the successor states to the Roman empire.[485] The Jews are said to have received a visible sign from God himself, which means that they must not be touched. This statement, contained in a work probably finished after Sisebut's death, can be read as an implicit but clear censure of the latter's policies against the Jews. They are said to be distinct from the community of the other peoples; therefore they cannot be integrated into the nation constituting the basis of

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[480] For the stereotype of heresy coming from the east see also Sulpicius Severus, *chron.* 2, 46, 1 (SC 441, 332); the author refers to the alleged eastern origins of Priscillianism, which receives the conventional label "gnosticism". On the east as a "hotbed of heresy" see also Tolan, *Saracens. Islam in the Medieval European Imagination*, New York 2002, 13. However, Isidore cannot have considered heresy to be a problem of the past that had been dealt its death blow, as indicated ibid. 16; he rather assumed that it subsisted as a foreign (!) problem, against which the Visigoths were called upon to stand up.

[481] Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville. Genèse et originalité de la culture hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*, Turnhout 2000, 125.

[482] For anthropological aspects of the distinction between "in-group" and "out-group" cf. Pohl, "Telling the Difference: Signs of Ethnic Identity", *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, Leiden *et al.* 1998, 21.

[483] *enarr. in Ps.* 58, 1, 21 (CCL 39, 744). See also *s.* 374, 15 (ed. Dolbeau, 606).

[484] *Gens autem Iudaeorum sive sub paganis regibus, sive sub Christianis, non amiserit signum legis, et circumcisionis suae* (*quaest. in Gen.* 6, 17; PL 83, 226).

[485] *quaest. in Gen.* 6, 18 (ibid.). On the patristic interpretation of Cain with reference to the Jews see Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law*, Berkeley *et al.* 1999, 28 f.

the realm.[486] Such an integration could only happen after receiving
Christian baptism.[487] Isidore does not allude to mass baptisms but to
conversions of individual Jews. Yet the deduction of the legality of
Jewish existence from Gen. 4 means that the Jews are declared to
be foreigners, outsiders, thought to be distinct from the indigenous
population; they do not form part of the *patria*.[488] Although the details
of this exposition are due to the structure of the biblical text, taken
as a whole Isidore's interpretation presents a coherent justification of
Jewish life and existence in the present. However, unlike e.g. Gregory
the Great Isidore was unfamiliar with the notions of Roman law, which
prevented him from elaborating on the legal basis of their presence in
post-Roman society. By labelling them as foreigners he basically denied
them their right to citizenship, which was legally finalized in the law
code of 654.[489]

4.4. *Anti-Judaism as cultural and political "capital"*

From the times of the New Testament onwards Jews were presented by
Christian authors as types, used to construct specific Christian identities
for exegetical or ecclesiastical reasons. Especially telling is the gospel of
John, where "the Jews" appear as an anonymous group lacking indi-
vidual characteristics, presented as adversaries of the Christian com-
munity. Whereas in the Synoptic gospels this antagonistic role is largely
played by "the Pharisees"—this term also being used as a polemical
generalization—, John promotes the indistinct mass of "all the Jews",
as it were, to a position of structural enemies of the Christians. His
position was doubtlessly due to deeply felt disappointment not only
at the refusal of the majority of the Jews to acknowledge Jesus as
the Messiah but also at the attitude they took towards Christians in
times of crisis during the first century. What is important in this con-

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[486] *Sed et omnis imperator, vel rex, qui eos in suo regno invenit, cum ipso signo eos invenit, et
non occidit; id est, non efficit ut non sint Iudaei, certo quodam et proprio suae observationis signo a
caeterarum gentium communione discreti* (*quaest. in Gen.* 6, 18).

[487] Ibid.: *nisi quicunque eorum ad Christum transierit.*

[488] ... *instabilis, et fluctuans, et sedis incertae* (*quaest. in Gen.* 6, 19). This theological inter-
pretation of the diaspora is also found *quaest. in Gen.* 17, 4 (PL 83, 248).

[489] For the replacement of Roman citizenship by Catholicism as "base esencial de la
nueva identidad del reino visigodo" see González Salinero, *Las conversiones forzosas de los
judíos en el reino visigodo*, Rome 2000, 16 note 13.

nection is that John presents the Jews as an indistinct group, already outside the Christian community.[490]

In late antiquity Augustine devised a theory according to which Jews serve as witnesses to the Christians. Their alleged blindness was used to highlight the clarity and lucidity of Christian truth. More importantly, Augustine used the Jews as point of reference in his argument with pagan, neoplatonic philosophers, who doubted the truth of Christian doctrine because of its apparent novelty and supposed lack of ancient tradition. In this context Augustine introduced the Jews, pointing to their holy writings, the Old Testament of the Christians, which—according to his argument—backed the Christian position, proving Christian doctrine, the message of the New Testament and the messianity of Jesus. Jews were thus promoted to a position of hermeneutic witnesses to the church, they were instrumentalized as tools needed to grasp and understand Christian doctrines.

The Christian attitude towards the Jews, as it developed throughout antiquity, comprised two different approaches. On the one hand, Jews were presented as outsiders and adversaries, if not enemies, who were allegedly threatening Christian doctrines and identities. At the same time, "the Jew" served as a backdrop to construct and highlight Christian self-perceptions, being a symbol for an archetypical "out-group", who had the function—in a negative sense—to strengthen the cohesion of the Christian community. On the other hand, Jews performed a positive function, allegedly proving the truth of Christianity in its argument against pagan philosophers.

At the beginning of the middle ages the situation changed decisively, since pagan philosophy ceased to flourish on the territory of the former Roman empire; therefore the testimony of the Jews was no longer needed in this respect. However, Jews were still given a hermeneutic task in Christian theology, this time not in external argument but for the interpretation of scripture.

In the late Roman and Byzantine empire Jews were named alongside pagans, heretics and Samaritans as religious outsiders who deviated from Catholic orthodoxy. However, these groups were named side by side, without assigning any one of them a special position or task on the political and theological agenda. The Christian emperor regarded himself as the unquestionable foundation stone and fountain of ortho-

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[490] M. Rissi, "'Die Juden' im Johannesevangelium", *ANRW* II, 26, 3, Berlin/New York 1996, 2099–2141.

doxy. There had been emperors in the past who had sympathized with and supported doctrines which were later regarded as unorthodox by the Catholic church, but this did not harm the firm conviction of every single emperor that he was the guarantor of religious orthodoxy. This conviction was in no need of corroboration or proof on the part of external "witnesses".

By contrast, Visigothic kings were much less secure in their religious identity. Even though the Visigoths had adopted the so-called Arian form of Christianity in the 4th century, when it was the religion of the Roman emperor in Constantinople, their Arian denomination had later become a symbol, in fact the most important mark of their identity. When the Goths became increasingly Romanized in language, dress, burial culture and court ceremonial, religion remained the most important if not the only sign distinguishing them from the Catholic majority. This had never been the case with those East Roman emperors who had equally embraced so-called Arian doctrines in the 4th century. In Visigothic Spain, "Arianism" acquired a social function markedly different from the conditions which had prevailed in the century of its inception.

When the Visigoths converted to Catholicism in 589, they gave up the symbol which had until then been the most important sign of their distinct identity. In fact, Catholic clergymen such as Leander of Seville, a scion of a Hispano-Roman family, extolled the unity of the new Catholic nation. At the same time King Reccared, the instigator of the turn in Gothic religious policies, was hailed by Gregory the Great as an "apostle" who had brought an entire nation to the Catholic church, thereby assuring his own eternal salvation. Subsequent Gothic kings were faced with a double dilemma: unlike Byzantine emperors, they could not self-confidently style themselves as traditional champions of orthodoxy, since their predecessors had persistently done just the opposite. On the other hand, they did have an unquestionably orthodox king in their line whose apostolic mission and standing had been recognized by the pope himself, even though the Roman pontiff was not always held in high esteem in 7th-century Spain. Nonetheless, it was tempting for Visigothic kings to emulate Reccared's policies which might pave the way towards a continuation of that "apostolic" mission.

When Arianism had disappeared from the Visigothic scene in the 7th century, the Christian population of the kingdom being—at least officially—united in a single church, the Gothic elite was faced with the problem of how to define their new identity, both with regard to their

own past and to their Hispano-Roman subjects. The official line was to integrate the Catholic Hispano-Romans into the *gens Gothorum*. The 3rd council of Toledo was viewed as a mythical *origo gentis* of this new nation which was defined as both Catholic and Gothic. This invention of a new tradition needed to be underpinned by numerous strategies designed to sharpen and propagate this new self-image.

Externally, the Gothic monarchy presented itself as a champion of orthodoxy, while at the same time casting doubts on the religious purity of the faith of its rivals. Ever since the controversy of the three chapters Byzantine emperors had been suspected of sympathyzing with heretical tendencies in the east, since they tried to reconcile the large number of "Monophysites" living in the empire. It was more difficult to denigrate the orthodoxy of the Merovingian Franks who had officially been Catholics since the early 6th century. However, King Sisebut wrote a hagiographic account of the "martyrdom" of bishop Desiderius of Vienne who had been killed at the instigation of the Austrasian rulers Brunichild and Theuderic II. It is true that this Life was meant to promote and intensify relations with the recently reunited Merovingian kingdom whose unity was based on the Neustrian royal line untainted by Desiderius's "martyrdom"; in fact, the perpetrators of the murder had been the enemies of the new Frankish king.[491] But as regards the Visigothic kingdom itself, the Life could be read not so much as an exposition trying to improve relations with the Frankish ruler, but on the contrary, it could serve tendencies trying to cast doubt on the religious situation prevailing in Gaul.[492]

It is significant that the tradition of hagiography in the Visigothic capital of Toledo starts with just this Life of a foreign "martyr", at a time when the Life of the city's patron saint Leocadia had not yet been written. The first Life describing the spiritual biography of a Spanish monk, Braulio of Zaragoza's *Vita Emiliani*, was written—among other things—to promote a Spanish ascetic who would be able to surpass the Merovingian saint *par excellence*, Saint Martin of Tours. All of this can be interpreted as part of the efforts of the new Gothic elite, comprising descendants of both Hispano-Roman and Gothic families, to bolster the religious orthodoxy of their own nation

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[491] Fontaine, "King Sisebut's *Vita Desiderii* and the Political Function of Visigothic Hagiography", *Visigothic Spain. New Approaches*, Oxford 1980, 93–129.

[492] Sisebut presents Brunichild as a religious enemy (*hostis regulae christianae*), almost as a descendant of the pagans of antiquity; cf. Fontaine, ibid. 127.

through a deliberate attempt to surpass and denigrate their foreign neighbours.[493] Yet the propagandists of the Gothic monarchy, and more especially Isidore of Seville, failed to produce a popular saint who could serve as an identity-generating cultic centre for the whole nation.[494]

However, Gothic identity also needed an internal foundation. The *origo gentis* of 589 took Catholic Christianity as its ideological corner-stone. If possible, propagators of the new "national" ideology tried to gloss over the Arian past of the Gothic monarchy.[495] While Leander of Seville had composed various anti-Arian works, all of which are lost (a fact which may be revealing), his younger contemporaries significantly did not follow suit.[496] This may seem unsurprising since Arianism soon ceased to be a serious threat to the Catholic church;[497] but still there were some uprisings until the end of the 6th century which may have used remnants of Arianism as a pretext or slogan, and memories of "Arianism" may have continued to be a symbol of political resistance right into the 7th century.[498] In the 630s a deacon of the Lusitanian capital Mérida wrote a series of Lives, extolling saints and bishops of his diocese. In a period when attempts to strengthen the central role of Toledo were firmly on their way, he tried to promote the cult of the

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[493] de Jong, "Adding Insult to Injury: Julian of Toledo and his *Historia Wambae*", *The Visigoths. From the Migration Period to the Seventh Century*, Woodbridge 1999, 378: "(Julian) must have hoped they adopt the sense of exclusive identity and group cohesion he sought to instill in the elite of the kingdom. The *Historia Wambae* is about the virtuous *gens* and *patria* of the Goths, beset by perfidious external enemies." See also Classen, "Introduction: The Self, the Other, and Everything in Between: Xenological Phenomenology of the Middle Ages", *Meeting the Foreign in the Middle Ages*, New York/London 2002, 11*–73*.

[494] For the establishment of a "consensus" and of new social relations by way of the veneration of saints (in the wake of Peter Brown's research) see Hayward, "Demystifying the Role of Sanctity in Western Christendom", *The Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, Oxford 1999, 117.

[495] Linehan, "Impacto del III concilio de Toledo en las relaciones iglesia-estado durante el medioevo", *Concilio III de Toledo. XIV centenario 589–1989*, Toledo 1991, 427: "Distinguir tajantemente entre arrianismo y catolicismo y establecer una separación entre los hechos anteriores a mayo del año 589 y los posteriores eran precisamente lo que Recaredo quería evitar a toda costa."

[496] Domínguez del Val, *Leandro de Sevilla y la lucha contra el arrianismo*, Madrid 1981.

[497] Collins, "¿Dónde estaban los arrianos en el año 589?", *Concilio III de Toledo. XIV centenario 589–1989*, Toledo 1991, 211–222; Collins points out that Arians and Catholics had moved closer to one another already before 589.

[498] Linehan, *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain*, Oxford 1993, 28. According to Gil ("Judíos y cristianos en la Hispania del siglo VII", *Hispania Sacra* 30, 1977, 12ff.) the criticism labelled by Pope Honorius I at Spanish bishops in 637 was not motivated by Jewish but by Arian activities.

local patron Saint Eulalia; but what is more important in this connection, he emphasized the tyranny of the Arian King Leovigild in the 6th century, while at the same time praising Catholic clergy for their resistance. In the context of the 7th century this is a remarkable reminder of the heretical past of the Gothic monarchy, and it sheds some light on the fragility of the new concept of a Catholic *gens Gothorum*. However, representatives of the political and ecclesiastical elite rarely, if ever, referred to the Arian past in the 7th century because this would have undermined the internal cohesion of the kingdom. Perhaps this is the reason why no Visigothic author after Isidore of Seville wrote any historiographical work dealing with events of the 6th century.

By contrast, the existence of the Jewish minority increasingly came under discussion. Even though there were still "pagan" remnants in some parts of Spain,[499] officially the Jews were the only religious group on Visigothic territory which did not form part of the new *gens Gothorum*, as it was redefined after 589. King Sisebut emulated his predecessor Reccared, taking up his "apostolic" mission by converting an entire people, in this case the Jews, to Catholicism. Theoretically, all inhabitants of the peninsula were now incorporated into the *gens Gothorum* whose defining mark was the Catholic creed.

However, since the Jews refused to abide by the results of their forced conversion, both the authority of the Gothic king and the cohesion of his subjects seemed to be under threat. The identity of *rex*, *gens* and *patria Gothorum* was perceived to be undermined by Jews who refused to join the "nation" defined by baptism. In much the same way as the identity of the Gothic people was externally underpinned by opposing Gothic orthodoxy against alleged Byzantine and Frankish deviance or even heresy, it was constructed internally by creating and promoting the image of a "political Jew", the representative of a group of outcasts charged with undermining "national" stability. Successive Gothic kings tried to achieve a "real" conversion of the Jews, but their attempts failed. As contemporary inhabitants of Spain the Jews no longer (exclusively) served a hermeneutic but also a political purpose, being used as a backdrop against which Gothic identity was created and maintained.

The conversion of the Visigoths to Catholicism marked the end of their "inculturation" into the Roman culture of late antiquity. In

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[499] Hillgarth, "Popular Religion in Visigothic Spain", *Visigothic Spain. New Approaches*, Oxford 1980, 3–60.

previous centuries they had adopted Roman language, custom, dress
and court ceremonial. In 589 they became Roman in religion, too. The
religious heritage of Roman Christianity also included Catholic anti-
Judaism in its diverse representations and shapes. However, although
anti-Judaism formed part of the intellectual legacy also in the Byzantine
empire and in most of the successor states to the western empire, it
was not accorded a central political function outside Visigothic Spain.
Nowhere were the Jews used to define the identity of a "nation"; in
the Byzantine empire they were one of several religious minorities, all
of which served as "out-groups" against which the orthodoxy of the
emperor could be brought into focus.

In Visigothic Spain traditional anti-Judaism was promoted to the
rank of political "capital", in the sense of being invested with ideo-
logical and political value, which could in turn be converted into other
forms of "capital".[500] Such capital is essential to ensure the position of
elites and their control of society. Different societies accord value to
quite different forms of behaviour, knowledge, possessions and belief.
In any case people wanting to be part of the ruling elite must accomo-
date themselves to these sets of values, unless they succeed in overturn-
ing the system, establishing themselves as a new elite. However, such
radical, revolutionary change is rather exception than rule, at least in
premodern societies. In the more distant past new elites mostly tried
to engratiate themselves with the old ones, trying to gain access to the
established system by adopting its values, beliefs and norms.

When the Visigoths consolidated their kingdom in Gaul and Spain
they gradually adopted the culture of the established Roman elites.
However, initially they were keen to maintain their separate identity
because otherwise they would have lost their claim to leadership. The
Hispano-Roman aristocracy was culturally and economically far supe-
rior to the Gothic nobility which might soon have been absorbed by the
Catholic majority, had it not maintained the Arian form of Christianity
as the touchstone of its identity. The religious division became one of
the major factors in defining the cultural and political "capital" of the
Gothic elite.

The religious change of 589 implied a fundamental shake-up and re-
valuation of that capital. The traditional religious divide disappeared,
leaving Christian Hispano-Romans and Goths in the same group. Since

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[500] Bourdieu, *Soziologische Fragen*, Frankfurt/M. 1993; id., "Ökonomisches Kapital,
kulturelles Kapital, soziales Kapital", *Soziale Ungleichheiten*, Göttingen 1983, 183–198.

the time-honoured status of Roman citizenship had long lost its former importance it was no longer used to define the political and cultural identity of the majority of the population. Their status as *cives Romani* was of no use to the Jews when the Visigoths redefined the scope of the terms *rex*, *lex* and *patria Gothorum*; Roman culture was integrated into the Visigothic set of values and the Jewish Romans lost their claim to be part of the "Roman" majority. The Visigoths laid claim to Roman culture, incorporating it into their own "heritage" and transforming it into the mainstay of the capital which was used to justify their rule over Spain. Catholic anti-Judaism was part of this heritage, although until then it had not been invested with special political significance. But it did form part of the Roman cultural tradition which could in time be converted into other forms of capital if that was deemed necessary.

When the *gens Gothorum* was redefined after 589, such a conversion of cultural capital took place. Catholic anti-Judaism, which had come into existence in the course of the theological controversies of the first Christian centuries, was invested with political significance. The last *origo gentis* of the Visigoths left the Jews as the only religious minority on Spanish soil. At a time when the Christian Hispano-Roman elite was expected to merge with the Gothic nobility, Isidore of Seville deemed it inopportune to discuss the religious division of the past in his theological works; the memory of Arianism was left to people who resented the new policy orchestrated by the court of Toledo and its propagandists, most of whom were not of Gothic but of Roman descent. Isidore placed himself into the tradition which took the religious change of 589 as a starting point for the reconceptualization of the Gothic *gens* which was conceived of as both a religious and a political community. This community was not an archaic, "gentile" or "Germanic" one but (at least theoretically and potentially) a union of the entire Christian population of the kingdom.

After Isidore's death, the Gothic monarchy became increasingly territorialized and the church almost acquired the status of a separate "national" church. However, this concept failed because religious unity alone could not provide the kingdom with a sufficient degree of internal stability and, more importantly, religious unity was never completely achieved. Anti-Jewish rhetoric served as a symbol for the intention to accomplish this project of unification, but apparently parts of the population refused to sever all economic and social links with the Jews. On the long run, anti-Jewish rhetoric (and politics) proved insufficient to

generate a sense of coherence and belonging, and anti-Judaism failed to ignite a feeling of identification among the Christian population at large.

Catholic Hispano-Romans shaped and defined the new Gothic identity which was designed to include the whole Christian population. The basis of this Gothic identity was Catholic tradition, which formed the bulk of the cultural capital justifying the rule of the new "Gothic" elite. For this purpose "Gothic" propagandists also created an image of "the Jew", they defined Jewish identity, which—paradoxically—later also included Jewish converts to Christianity whose allegiance to their new faith was suspected to be doubtful. Augustine had created an image of the Jews as librarians of the Christians who allegedly served as witnesses to Christian truth against the pagans. This function of the Jews was made possible by the intellectually competetive situation of the 5th century; the late antique "intellectual field" generated a form of "identity" ascribed to the Jews which was based on the hermeneutic service they allegedly performed against their own will.

By the 7th century this situation had changed dramatically since there were no longer pagan philosophers on the intellectual scene.[501] Hispano-Gothic intellectuals defined their new identity with regard to the Roman past: the Goths were presented as military victors but first of all as champions of freedom and orthodoxy.[502] This self-image was also applied to the contemporary situation: the Goths were said to be the heirs of classical culture and virtues, the protectors of the church and of Catholic doctrine. The intellectual field was no longer defined by an argument against pagans (as well as against heretics and schismatics) like in Augustine's time but by an argument against the Jews, more especially against the phantom of the "political Jew" created by Catholic-Gothic propagandists. The political Jew was part of the imaginary political scene on which the Gothic self-image was being created in confrontation with the (alleged) external and internal enemies of orthodoxy.

The hermeneutical Jew had been used as point of reference in an intellectual argument,[503] conducted to strengthen Christian iden-

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[501] Markus, "The Jew as a Hermeneutic Device: The Inner Life of a Gregorian Topos", *Gregory the Great*, Notre Dame/London 1995, 10.

[502] Drews, "Goten und Römer als Gegenstand der Historiographie bei Isidor von Sevilla", *Saeculum* 53 (2002), 1–20.

[503] Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law*, Berkeley *et al.* 1999, 65.

tity against its late antique competitors by differentiating it from Jewish interpretations of scripture while at the same time claiming the Jewish scriptures for Christianity. Because the standing and tradition of Christianity was no longer called into question in 7th-century Spain, Gothic propagandists could conduct an entirely different argument, converting traditional anti-Judaism into political capital. The political Jew was constructed by categorically affirming its "negative" identity as an impostor, an enemy of truth and faith, allegedly threatening to undermine not only the church but—more importantly perhaps—the Gothic "nation" and the political system. Those parts of the Gothic elite involved in the effort to promote a new self-image were trying to replace the Roman identity of a citizen (*civis*) by the Gothic one of *catholicus*; this religious definition precisely implied the exclusion of the Jews who finally lost their status as *cives Romani* after 654, when it was no longer included in the new code of laws.

An analysis of the history of Catholic anti-Judaism must always be based on the historical context, especially on the challenges faced by those Christians who regard themselves as orthodox. It was precisely with regard to their competitors and (supposed) adversaries that Catholic Christians designed and sharpened their identity. Isidore of Seville presented the history of a Gothic self-image which was marked by successive opposition to Romans and Jews. In order to achieve this end he used ancient traditions, converting them into political capital which could legitimate the rule of the new Gothic elite, into which he himself, scion of a Hispano-Roman family, had gained access after the religious turn of 589.[504]

The elite ruling the kingdom of Toledo tried to create a new political system based on the three pillars of *gens, rex* and *patria Gothorum*, aiming at an incorporation of the Christian majority of the Hispano-Roman population. This fragile system could be stabilized by strategies of inclusion or exclusion.[505] Reccared tried to sharpen a consciousness of difference with regard to outsiders who were excluded from the new "nation". The principal political experience of difference had so far

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[504] According to Claude Isidore's works show the beginning of a process during which the Hispano-Romans gradually identified with the ruling Goths ("pseudologische Gleichsetzung"); see Claude, "Gentile und territoriale Staatsideen im Westgotenreich", *FMSt* 6 (1972), 19.

[505] On the opportunities offered by the application of categories developed within the context of *Systemtheorie* for an analysis of modern nations see Bielefeld, *Nation und Gesellschaft. Selbstthematisierungen in Deutschland und Frankreich*, Hamburg 2003.

been based on the distinction between Hispano-Romans (Roman citizens, comprising Catholic Christians and Jews) and Goths. When the dividing line was transferred at the 3rd council of Toledo, the political system was in need of complete reorientation. The identity of the Catholic Goths was first maintained by keeping the Jews out of the new "nation", producing a new code of difference between Goths and Jews. When Sisebut tore down this dividing line, too, the new *gens Gothorum* became all-inclusive, potentially eradicating all internal experience of religious difference; the system was reorientated towards strategies of inclusion.[506]

When the Jews refused to accept the result of their forced conversion, the system re-established itself by re-instating the old dividing line; forcefully converted Jews were, although nominally Christian, continuously referred to as "Jews", thereby perpetuating the experience of religious difference not only externally, with regard to Byzantines and "oriental" heretics, but also internally in opposition to "the Jews". The code ensuring access to the ruling elite consisted in the "sincere" profession of the Catholic creed; sincerity was, however, a doubtful category, keeping the exclusion of "doubtful" Christians within the range of possibility. Political and religious rhetoric did not rely on actual knowledge of and contact with Hispanic Jews; even though the latter did have economic and social contacts with their Christian neighbours, such contacts did not impinge upon "official" rhetoric.

In a way, the "unknown" Jews were a transformation of the Greek and Roman discourse on "Barbarians", a basically unknown group of outsiders who were not in possession of the key cultural capital necessary to gain access to the realm of "civilization". Following their patristic predecessors, Visigothic authors adopted a "textual attitude" towards Jews.[507] Said's presentation of the modern western approach to "the Orient" and "Orientals" bears some resemblance to the patristic attitude towards "the Jew", being conceived of as the archetypically

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[506] Cf. de Jong, "Adding Insult to Injury: Julian of Toledo and his *Historia Wambae*", *The Visigoths. From the Migration Period to the Seventh Century*, Woodbridge 1999, 383: "Gothic identity is embodied by both *gens* and *patria*. The latter is clearly a territorial notion, but the former has nothing to do with ethnic identity. At best it is an ethnic label encompassing all those who are neither dishonoured nor 'other'." On the necessitiy to "profess oneself a Christian in order to belong to the Visigothic political community" see ead. in the discussion ibid., 460.

[507] Said, *Orientalism*, London/New York 1978, 92–98. For the "myth of the arrested development of the Semites" see ibid. 306, for "generalizations" ibid. 227–236.

"other" that has to be dominated, appropriated and assimilated. Also the conceptualization of the Orient as being "synonymous with stability and unchanging eternality" ("synchronic essentialism" in Said's terminology)[508] shows a remarkable parallel to patristic notions of the "unknown Jews". "The Jew" was constructed as an "alien" object which was unknown precisely because it was alienated, notionally separated from the majority (the in-group), which presented itself as being in the possession of the cultural capital ensuring their claim to leadership. From the point of view of patristic and Visigothic theologians, Judaism had to be kept under Christian control; the main instrument to achieve this aim was the use and reproduction of knowledge justifying and guaranteeing superiority and control (domination knowledge). Isidore's project to instill Christian values into Visigothic society by way of his literary works can be interpreted as an attempt to provide members of the new "Gothic" elite with suitable domination knowledge (*Herrschaftswissen*) justifying their claim to leadership. In the case of *de fide catholica* this was such knowledge as was deemed appropriate to generate a feeling of superiority over the Jews and a "proper" understanding of basic tenets of Catholic theology, most especially the mission of the gentile nations within the economy of salvation.

It is impossible to deduce Visigothic anti-Judaism from the religious change which occurred at the 3rd council of Toledo. There is no causal link between Reccared's and Sisebut's actions although the policies of the latter have to be interpreted in the light of the former. 589 can be seen as a new *origo gentis*, instituting a new political system and a "foundation myth" meant to be remembered by later generations.[509] The elite ruling this system relied on the traditions and on the "cultural capital" of its components, namely Roman culture (including Christianity) and the vague memory of distinct traditions of a Barbarian people which had, however, become hardly discernible by the end of antiquity. The rather imprecise nature of Gothic identity enabled its complete redefinition; the label "Gothic" was now applied to Hispano-Roman traditions after investing them with special religious overtones; in fact, religion became the main code defining the character of the new Gothic "nation".

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[508] Ibid. 240.

[509] The second aspect of Isidore's definition of *gens* refers precisely to this aspect, the memory of being distinct from other groups: *Gens est multitudo ab uno principio orta, sive ab alia natione secundum propriam collectionem distincta* (*etym*. IX, 2, 1; Reydellet, 41).

Precisely for this reason the forceful conversion of the Jews had such disastrous consequences; crypto-Judaism was a potential threat to the code on which the political system relied as its main foundation. Visigothic anti-Judaism did not emerge out of nowhere, it was a result of the politicization of religion in the wake of the 3rd council of Toledo. When the distinction of the three groups Goths, Catholics, and Jews was replaced by the binary system Catholic Goths versus Jews, the political scene became much more religiously determined than before. Goths tried to eradicate the memory of their former religious difference, now perceived as a deviation from orthodox truth; this endeavour could be fuelled by visible proofs of orthodoxy in the present. However, such proofs could endanger the stability of the political system, threatening the religious code of Gothic identity.

If the *gens Gothorum* were tainted with the suspicion of harbouring heterodox, Jewish tendencies among its members, its claim to leadership was potentially undermined because orthodoxy was precisely the essential ingredient of the cultural capital the Goths were converting into political control in the 7th century. Sisebut had put this capital in jeopardy, and his successors proved unable to redress the balance. They did not manage, and they may not have wanted to in the first place, to redefine Gothic identity once more, using other elements of the cultural traditions inherited from antiquity. The overestimation of religious capital turned out to be a danger to the stability of both church and "state".

The triad of *gens*, *rex*, and *patria Gothorum* might have been interpreted differently, which would have made possible its adaptation to changing religious and political circumstances. However, the unequivocal identification of Goths and Catholicism made the further readjustment of the political system increasingly difficult, endemic religious suspicion poisoned and endangered the internal balance of the kingdom. The experience of religious difference did no longer stabilize the system, it rather undermined its very foundations. In the final analysis the Visigoths failed to invent a new code which would have stabilized the rule of the Hispano-Gothic elite.[510] Even without the Arab conquest it would

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[510] On the ultimate failure of integration strategies at the end of the 7th century see Heather in the discussion to de Jong, "Adding Insult to Injury: Julian of Toledo and his *Historia Wambae*", *The Visigoths. From the Migration Period to the Seventh Century*, Woodbridge 1999, 395, who points to "an over-narrowing of the political élite, leaving too many people out."

have been necessary to address and solve the fundamental problem of the increasing radicalization of anti-Jewish policies; such a solution would have needed a redefinition of political loyalty and a more flexible approach to religious identity.

CONCLUSION

5.1. De fide catholica *within the context of Isidore's theological argument*

When writing his treatise *de fide catholica contra Iudaeos*, Isidore of Seville relied heavily on patristic tradition; however, concept and structure of the two books are his own invention. There are only partial similarities to sequences of biblical prooftexts in other works still known today. In some passages he simplified and shortened the argument of earlier authors, mainly Jerome. Isidore shows no reluctance to use scriptures not forming part of the Jewish canon, nor does he avoid quoting the Bible according to versions not in line with the Hebrew text. Only rarely does he reject Jewish arguments. It is undeniable that his linguistic and philological competence in Greek and Hebrew was not sufficient for him to collate different versions of biblical prooftexts and check theological arguments based on an interpretation of differences between them. Therefore his argument, which can often be refuted with a reference to the Hebrew text, cannot have been convincing in the eyes of possible Jewish readers, who used either the Hebrew Bible or translations closely based on it, but who would never have accepted arguments based on the Septuagint version if such diverging interpretations were not borne out by the Hebrew text. Isidore neither had the intention nor the qualifications to address the Jews; his intellectual horizon was limited to the Gothic-Catholic community and its traditions. The explanation of Christian faith against the background of alleged Jewish errors had merely the function of a declaration of faith directed at the Christian majority.[1]

In his anti-Jewish treatise Isidore wants to create the impression that Catholic faith can be deduced from the Old Testament alone; therefore

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[1] This is another parallel to Said's "orientalism": Orientalists never intend "orientals", people they write about, as readers (Said, *Orientalism*, London/New York 1978, 336).

he largely avoids mentioning the New Testament, patristic authors or church councils, although his argument in fact rests on assumptions and ideas deduced from the latter sources. Catholic faith, named already in the title of the work, is considered to be the one and only hermeneutical key opening the door to an understanding of all the scriptures. This faith is taken by Isidore as a guideline for conceiving a Christian society in other works.

In one passage of his anti-Jewish treatise Isidore mentions a Jewish argument that is based on the alleged existence of a mysterious Jewish king in the east. This argument cannot be traced in earlier tradition, which is an indication that the author did not follow patristic sources slavishly; he was able and willing to adapt his argument to the present situation, if necessary. Even though his sources and method are largely unoriginal for the rest, his exegetical conclusions receive a particular meaning and importance when put into the contemporary historical context. Although the work probably originated from the reign of King Sisebut, who ordered the forced baptism of all Jews of a kingdom for the first time in history, Isidore shows no interest in converting the Jews in the present. He sticks to Paul's notion that the Jews will only convert at the end of times; in one passage he even claims—using the words of a biblical prooftext—that this will happen in the land of Israel after the return of the Jews from their diaspora.

Even though Isidore devotes considerable attention to the discussion of baptism, he makes no statement concerning the catechumenate or other forms of baptismal preparation. This is all the more peculiar because he mentions and discusses two steps of such preparation in his treatise *de ecclesiasticis officiis*, which would have been written before *de fide catholica*, according to traditional dating. What is more, in view of the forced baptisms ordered by Sisebut a word on preparation for the reception of the sacrament might have been expected, if the treatise should have been composed after that decree at all. A reason for Isidore's silence on that point may be his reluctance to make an unequivocal statement during the king's lifetime.

The Augustinian theory of Jewish witness plays only a minor role in Isidore's thinking; the most explicit statement in that regard can be found in the *quaestiones*, one of his later works, for which he may have used, however, material collected during all his life. It appears that Isidore avoided making explicit statements concerning the life and existence of Jews in Christian society, which is particularly obvious in the *sententiae*. Yet his statements allow the conclusion that he was

neither in favour of deviating from patristic tradition nor of changing the existing legal status of the Jews.

In all his works written during Sisebut's lifetime he did not voice open criticism of the king's Jewish policies. However, his insistence on the eschatological conversion in *de fide catholica* can be read as implicit criticism; time and conditions of that conversion seem to be left to God's ordination alone. Since his argument in this treatise is almost entirely dogmatic and exegetical, there are no normative statements concerning appropriate behaviour, not even in relation to Jews. In its historical context, the reign of Sisebut, the work can be read as a warning against radical steps and as an admonition not to interfere rashly in the economy of salvation. The latter is ordained by God alone, and God's ordination should be known to the Christians through the mediation of the church and its ministers.

In his *History of the Goths*, written after the king's death, Isidore is more explicit on that point: Sisebut is credited with having shown zeal for God's case, but that eagerness is said to have lacked solid foundation in tradition. A comparative analysis of the terms used in this statement leaves no doubt that Isidore was quite critical of Sisebut's personality and policies, at least with hindsight. In the very passage on Sisebut Isidore recommends the way *provocare fidei ratione* as the (theoretically) promising method to convert Jews; a detailed comparative analysis has shown that this statement refers to preaching and instruction in church doctrine. The method used in *de fide catholica* is partially in keeping with this approach because the author deduces basic and central aspects of Catholic doctrine from biblical texts, without, however, having Jewish addressees in mind. He rather directs his argument at Catholic Christians who have already accepted that faith internally. Therefore, the treatise cannot be understood as a *provocatio* of the Jews themselves, at best only as a rhetorical *provocatio* before the eyes of the Christian majority, based on the latter's perception of the Jews, which is marked by prejudice rather than knowledge of the beliefs held by their Jewish neighbours.

Isidore's treatise is not a dogmatic textbook for instructing Catholic clergy; the fact that it is dedicated to a woman, his sister Florentina, precludes that hypothesis. The addressee is rather a representative of the group envisaged by the author: the work was written for all educated people with a certain interest in theology, including clergy and laypeople; it is important to recall that in Visigothic Spain education and culture were not restricted to a clerical elite. The limitation to

prooftexts from the Old Testament is due to the patristic tradition of literature *adversus Iudaeos*, but not to the intention of the author to persuade Jewish addressees.[2] He rather wants to strengthen the Christian faith of his audience by preparing them for theoretical arguments that might have been advanced by Jewish opponents, but only according to a Christian perception of such disputants.

In reality, Isidore is totally ignorant of the Hebrew Bible and of postbiblical Judaism, as was his audience. His argument could have been easily refuted by Jewish opponents. This is in stark contrast to Isidore's approach at the 2nd council of Seville, which is the only known case when he directly confronted a heterodox opponent. In order to refute and convince his "Monophysite" adversary Isidore used arguments from the very tradition of his opponent, which apparently produced the desired result. When this persuasive approach is compared to the method used in *de fide catholica* it becomes clear that Isidore did not care to put forward arguments that could have convinced "real" Jews; he rather has a "hermeneutical", "imaginary" Jew in mind, who is constructed according to Christian prejudice in order to make certain theological and political points. The author aims at strengthening the Catholic faith of his audience, reinforcing traditional prejudices and preparing his readers for hypothetical Jewish "arguments", which could only be expected from the perspective and on the basis of these very prejudices.

It is probable that interest in Judaism increased in the wake of Sisebut's legislation against the Jews. It has to be recalled that the king started his "anti-Jewish career" with two laws imposing additional restrictions on the Jews, before he finally proceeded to order forced baptisms. Isidore's treatise may have been written before these baptisms, but it has to be put into the context of the anti-Jewish legislation begun by Reccared and renewed by Sisebut. Isidore may have wanted to repeat traditional patristic doctrine to meet mounting interest in Christian theology referring to all matters relating to the Jews. He combined this with his general interest in providing Catholic Gothic society with cultural and religious foundations, the "capital" necessary to join the elite of the new kingdom. Perhaps on account of the recent denominational controversies among the Christian population

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[2] The older assumption that the treatise was written for Jewish addressees was recently repeated by Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville. Genèse et originalité de la culture hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*, Turnhout 2000, 317.

or because of the strong regional differences, the alternative concept of a monarchy founded on administrative and territorial instead of religious foundations was not deemed sufficient. Therefore, Gothic identity as conceived by Isidore combined both territorial and strong religious elements, the latter being meant to serve as the main factor to intensify the feeling of coherence among the elite.[3] In his treatise on Catholic faith he instilled biblical knowledge into his readers, moreover promoting his favourite idea that all gentiles have the mission to adopt and propagate this faith. The very superficial treatment of Jewish customs and the total absence of any warning against "Judaizing" tendencies may be an indication that the treatise was either written shortly after the forced baptisms, when the problem of "relapsing" Jews was not yet apparent, or rather before Sisebut's violent actions, perhaps after the initial anti-Jewish laws that stopped short of advocating baptism.

Isidore did not want to convince his readers of something new, he rather wanted to reinforce and supplement existing knowledge and belief. His argument can only have appeared "convincing" to Christians. He wanted to stabilize self-confidence and Christian identity of the new *gens Gothorum*, using the Jews as a negative foil and backdrop against which both Goths and Christian Hispano-Romans could be united.[4] From the body of patristic material Isidore clearly chooses one aspect that receives particular attention: the vocation of the gentiles to faith and their mission within the economy of salvation. Allegedly, salvation has passed from the Jews to the gentiles, who are supposedly called to succeed the Jews as the people of God. Only rarely does he explicitly mention the notion of the church as the true Israel, but this hypothesis clearly guides his theological thinking. The focus on the salutary function of the gentiles is directed both against the Jews as the people of the "old" covenant and against the contemporary Romans, the Byzantines, whose political claims are rejected by relegating them to the status of just one *gens* within the community of the gentiles, without any primacy whatsoever.

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[3] On the importance of intensity in addition to stability and continuity see Jarnut, "Aspekte frühmittelalterlicher Ethnogenese in historischer Sicht", *Herrschaft und Ethnogenese im Frühmittelalter*, Münster 2002, 25.

[4] Therefore it is surprising that Isidore does not follow Orosius in reporting the alleged plans of the Gothic King Ataulf, declared on the occasion of his marriage to the emperor's sister Galla Placidia, to replace the *Romania* by a *Gothia* (Oros. *hist.* 7, 43, 5 f.). This reluctance may be due to the negative motivation found in Orosius, but Isidore

In other works Isidore discusses questions of moral theology such as repentance and conversion, but in his treatise on Catholic faith he sticks to dogmatics and exegesis, also when discussing baptism and conversion. This is a reflection of an early medieval trend that increased further during the following centuries: sacramental grace was thought to be immediately effective, taking precedence over catechetical preparation for baptism. The church became increasingly institutionalized, hierarchy and office becoming more important than individual convictions of the faithful, who often lacked appropriate theological knowledge. In his treatise *de fide catholica* Isidore points out that baptism has sacramental effects, but he fails to indicate how those about to be baptized should be prepared for this decisive step. His so-called educational programme was designed to provide clergy and laypeople with Christian instruction, but non-Christians were not taken into consideration. Outside Visigothic Spain the reception of Isidore's œuvre was largely limited to the clergy, which contributed to neglecting Christian instruction of the "simple" faithful, for whom sacramental grace was thought to be sufficient. This development was due to several cultural and institutional factors, but certain features of Isidore's works may have prepared such trends, particularly a treatise as widely known in the Carolingian world as *de fide catholica*.

Isidore transmitted the patristic tradition of literature written *adversus Iudaeos* to the European middle ages. It is remarkable that the oldest extant treatise of that kind known to have been written on the Iberian peninsula appeared within the context of the "Isidorian renaissance". In this and in his other works Isidore contributed to the "stereotyping process"[5] that resulted in the production of a certain image of "the Jew" that was gradually incorporated into "collective memory" by constant repetition. Isidore had his share in the emergence of a stereotypical medieval perception of Jews and Judaism, combined with the propagation of their allegedly appropriate place within society; yet regarding the latter point Augustine's influence was clearly much stronger.

Isidore's concept of a Christian commonwealth implies the notion of Jews and heretics as outsiders. While the latter are not accorded any positive function within society, the position of the former is reluc-

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could easily have changed that; cf. Messmer, *Hispania-Idee und Gotenmythos*, Zurich 1960, 114. Perhaps he preferred a religious foundation to a mere "cultural" one.

    [5] Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society. Power and Deviance in Western Europe 950–1250*, Oxford/New York 1987, 91.

tantly outlined in his works; following Augustine Isidore presents the
Jews as witnesses to Christian truth. His treatise *de fide catholica* is meant
to instill a sense of superiority in Goths and Catholic Hispano-Romans,
whom the author wants to unite in his newly conceptualized *gens Gotho-
rum*. This unification was a matter very close to Isidore's heart; it
was to be based on Catholic faith, which received paramount political
importance within the framework of a political theology. The apolo-
gy of Catholic faith served to stabilize society as a whole; the iden-
tity of the ruling elite had to be shaped in such a way that it could
neither be shaken by outsiders nor undermined by internal divisions.
Isidore's treatise *de fide catholica* can be regarded as a handbook for
the (self)instruction of the average Christian cleric or layperson who
already possessed a minimum of theological knowledge and prepara-
tion and who wanted to get more information concerning the founda-
tions of Catholic faith. The treatise is a summary of the cultural capital
necessary in Visigothic Spain to gain access to the ruling elite of the
7th-century kingdom.

5.2. *The reception of Isidore's anti-Jewish treatise*

Still in the 7th century Isidore's treatise was used by Ildefonse and
Julian of Toledo when they composed their anti-Jewish writings. The
treatise *Isaiae testimonia de Christo Domino*, which is no longer attributed
to Isidore nowadays,[6] is evidence of the reception of his anti-Jewish
work in the Spanish middle ages. The manuscript tradition shows that
Isidore's treatise was copied mostly in the Carolingian empire once the
Visigothic kingdom had ceased to exist; this is basically true for all his
works.[7] The translation of part of the first book into Old High German
is an exception in that it was not motivated by a desire to conduct
an argument against Judaism but against Christian opponents of the

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[6] Díez Merino, "San Isidoro de Sevilla y la polémica judeocristiana", *La controversia
judeocristiana en España*, Madrid 1998, 95.

[7] In pre-Carolingian times his works spread to Merovingian Gaul, Italy, Ireland and
England, but precisely *de fide catholica* seems to have been little known outside Spain;
cf. Bischoff, "Die europäische Verbreitung der Werke Isidors von Sevilla", *Isidoriana*,
León 1961, 335. According to Beeson's table (*Isidor-Studien*, Munich 1913, 38–42 and
111), most early manuscripts were copied on the territory of modern France in the 9th
century; this is also true for the rest of his works. For the reception of Isidore's œuvre in
the middle ages see Anspach, "Das Fortleben Isidors im VII. bis IX. Jahrhundert",
Miscellanea Isidoriana, Rome 1936, 323–356; López Santos, "Isidoro en la literatura

Trinity, thus inversing Isidore's own intentions.[8] According to another interpretation, this translation was meant as a warning to Saxon nobles to abstain from further rebellions against Frankish rule; the Saxons would have been presented as "new Jews" who were to be deterred by the discouraging example of the defeated and dispersed Jews. The victorious Charlemagne would have been a kind of new Vespasian or Titus, as mentioned in Isidore's treatise.[9]

The use of Isidore's works decreased when Christian polemicists increasingly took rabbinic literature into consideration from the high middle ages onwards. Still quite conservative in this respect is Saint Martin of León (died 1203), who very much relied on Isidore's argument in his anti-Jewish polemics.[10] Not only did he follow Isidore's method to a large extent; he also copied substantial passages from the works of his hero.[11] In the 13th century Lucas of Tuy composed a legendary Life of Martin of León in which the saint has a miraculous vision. Isidore appears to him at night, forcing him to devour a small book; the result of this "communion" is the incorporation of Isidore's intellectual capacities into his high medieval "successor", who becomes Isidore's *alter ego* in overcoming theological adversaries as well as fighting Jews and heretics.[12] It is remarkable that Isidore had

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medioeval castellana", *Isidoriana*, León 1961, 400–443; Verger, "Isidore de Séville dans les universités médiévales", *L'Europe héritière de l'Espagne wisigothique*, Madrid 1992, 259–267.

[8] For the antiadoptionist tendency of the translation see Saibene, "La traduzione antico alto-tedesca del *De fide catholica contra Iudaeos* di Isidoro", *Il Confronto Letterario* 19 (1993), 73f. The translator does not address the fictitious opponents by a rendering of *Iudaei*, but with the equivalent of *increduli*, which facilitates the antiheretical reinterpretation; cf. ibid. 78. The explanatory style of the translation, which is sometimes marked by characteristic additions, is an indication that is was written for laypeople, which is anyway suggested by the choice of the vernacular.

[9] Riutort, "L'Isidor com a escrit polític e de política lingüística carolíngia en el marc de la disputa adopcionista i de les guerres carolíngies contra els saxons", *Anuari de Filologia* A 16 (1993), 113.

[10] He has even been referred to as the "culminación de la devoción isidoriana" (Díaz y Díaz, "Isidoro en la Edad Media hispana", *De Isidoro al siglo XI*, Barcelona 1976, 195). For Isidore's works as Martin's main source cf. Viñayo González, *San Martín de León y su apologética antijudía*, Madrid/Barcelona 1948, 10 and 202. For his use of the treatise *de fide catholica* ibid. 96 and 203–206.

[11] Ibid. 97. Cf. also Niclós, "San Martín de León y la controversia con los judíos en el siglo XII", *La controversia judeocristiana en España*, Madrid 1998, 243–252.

[12] On the presentation of Martin as an *Isidorus redivivus* see Drews, "Bücherverschlingung als kulturelle Praxis? Magisch-wunderbare Kommunikation in der spanischen Hagiographie des Hochmittelalters", *AKG* 86 (2004), 123–161.

become the embodiment of theological wisdom by that time; this had to become apparent in his ability to refute Jews and "heretics", even though the fight against the latter is hardly prominent in Isidore's own works. Yet for people of the high middle ages antiheretical activities were a main component of a theological career; therefore Isidore's high medieval Life promotes him to the dignity of a "hammer of heretics" (*malleus hereticorum*).[13] After having related Isidore's miraculous apparition, Lucas of Tuy praises the works Martin is able to compose as a "new Isidore"; these writings show characteristics also stereotypically attributed to Isidore's œuvre (strengthening of Catholic faith, struggle against Jews and heretics). This is a clear indication how Isidore's works were perceived in the high middle ages, a fact which is highlighted by Lucas's declaration that he wants to compose his Life of Martin for the glory of Christ and of his confessor Isidore. The latter was presented and perceived mainly as an embodiment of orthodoxy and as a fighter against heterodoxy of every kind, including Judaism. It is interesting to note that Lucas's contemporary, archbishop Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada of Toledo, a proponent of the "neogothic" ideology of the high middle ages, regarded Isidore as a Goth, thereby accepting the parameters of identity as defined at the 3rd council of Toledo and propagated by Isidore in the 7th century.[14]

Isidore's treatise *de fide catholica* was used not only by a conservative author such as Martin of León; also a more "modern" author of the 13th century, Raymund Martini, relied on the treatise when he wrote his famous and widely used anti-Jewish work *pugio fidei*.[15] In the later middle ages it still formed part of libraries of such works that were copied and handed down;[16] it was included in the collection of books owned by Pope Benedict XIII at the beginning of the 15th century.[17]

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[13] For the Leonese tradition of Isidore as a fighter against heresy and a promoter of holy war see Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville. Genèse et originalité de la culture hispanique au temps des Wisigoths*, Turnhout 2000, 418 with figures 94, 94b and 95, showing baroque artistic representations.

[14] Rodr. Tol. *Hist. Goth.* I, 9 (CCCM 72, 22): *Ysidorus Gothice gentis indigena et cronicorum disertor optimus*.

[15] Castán Lacoma, "San Isidoro de Sevilla. Apologista antijudaico", *Isidoriana*, León 1961, 455f.; Díaz y Díaz, "Isidoro en la Edad Media hispana", *De Isidoro al siglo XI*, Barcelona 1976, 198.

[16] Blumenkranz, "The Roman Church and the Jews", *Essential Papers on Judaism and Christianity in Conflict*, New York/London 1991, 206.

[17] See *supra*, p. 3. In the 13th century it existed also in the Spanish Benedictine abbey of Silos, as indicated by the library catalogue of that monastery; cf. Díaz y Díaz,

While the use of Isidore's works generally decreased in the later middle ages, his influence on anti-Jewish literature still remained comparatively high.[18] When Christian pressure exerted on Spanish Jews increased in the 15th century, interest in Isidore's arguments was also mounting.[19] Particular interest was focussed on the chronological arguments presented in his *Chronicle* and on his interpretation of Daniel's prophecies in *de fide catholica*. In particular, clerics who had converted from Judaism to Christianity relied on his arguments in their anti-Jewish works.[20] The Jewish humanist Isaac Abravanel even translated a passage from Isidore's *Etymologies* into Hebrew, probably motivated by a more learned interest.[21] The first book of *de fide catholica* was printed twice already in the 15th century, which clearly demonstrates its ongoing reception and use at the threshold of humanism and the Renaissance.

Isidore's treatise on Catholic faith was not only part of the Christian tradition of anti-Jewish literature; it is also a characteristic example of works propagating Catholic faith as an ideological foundation of society from the perspective of a political theology. This conceptualization of a Christian commonwealth was already taken up in the Carolingian empire in the 9th century. At that time leading scholars and churchmen tried to propagate a Christian way of life among all sectors of the population, which may be compared to the programme of the so-called Isidorian renaissance of the 7th century.[22] What is more, Carolingian authors renewed a tradition broken off after the 7th century, the writing of anti-Jewish works. Like in Isidore's time, anti-Jewish literature had the function to stabilize society and generate a form of identity meant

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"Isidoro en la Edad Media hispana", *De Isidoro al siglo XI*, Barcelona 1976, 193. A French codex from the 13th century now in Tortosa contains Isidore's *de fide catholica* and numerous other anti-Jewish works; cf. ibid., 195.

[18] Díaz y Díaz, ibid. 199. For the influence exerted by traditions of the 3rd council of Toledo see Linehan, "Impacto del III concilio de Toledo en las relaciones iglesia-estado durante el medioevo", *Concilio III de Toledo. XIV centenario 589–1989*, Toledo 1991, 427–439.

[19] For the use of Visigothic anti-Jewish legislation see Albert, "The 65th Canon of the IVth Council of Toledo (633) in Christian Legislation and its Interpretation in the *converso* Polemics in XVth-century Spain", *Proceedings of the World Conference of Jewish Studies* 8 (1982), 43–48.

[20] Genot-Bismuth, "L'Argument de l'histoire dans la tradition espagnole de polémique judéo-chrétienne d'Isidore de Séville à Isaac Abravanel et Abraham Zacuto", *From Iberia to Diaspora*, Leiden *et al.* 1999, 213 note 60.

[21] Ibid. 209.

[22] On the "Isidorian renaissance" now Collins, *Visigothic Spain 409–711*, Oxford 2004, 148 and 161.

to buttress the concept of a Christian commonwealth.[23] It should be noted that both in the Visigothic and in the Carolingian empire Christian authors tried to propagate the ideal of a thoroughly christianized or Catholic society; precisely in such periods abstract images of Jews were constructed and propagated, which had little in common with any "real" Jewish contemporaries. Jews, who were basically unknown as contemporary human beings, had the function to serve as "outsiders" against whom a Christian identity could be built up.[24] Isidore thought of clergy and laypeople as addressees when he produced his image of society and its outsiders; this is perhaps less clear in Carolingian authors, in whose time education was already more restricted to the clergy, although exceptions such as Einhard's should warn us against generalizations.

5.3. *Catholic faith, Jews, and Spanish identity*

The conceptualization of the Visigothic kingdom as a primarily Catholic society is an early example of a trend that was to become dominant in later periods of Spanish history.[25] In the high and later middle ages as well as in the early modern period the paradigm of *hispanidad* was used to advocate a version of Spanish identity based on Catholic faith;[26] this

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[23] Heil, *Kompilation oder Konstruktion? Die Juden in den Pauluskommentaren des 9. Jahrhunderts*, Hannover 1998 and the review by Kampling, *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 47 (1999), 357.

[24] Things are different in Einhard and Widukind of Corvey, in spite of the fact that they do functionalize the *fides christiana* as the basis of a step in the formation of a new ethnic community, which has the task to personify the identity of a Christian kingdom or empire by welding together Franks and Saxons in a new *gens* (Widukind I, 15: … *iam fratres et quasi una gens ex Christiana fide … facta est*; ed. Hirsch/Lohmann, 25) or in a new, unified *populus* (Einhard, *vit. Karoli* VII: *Christianae fidei atque religionis sacramenta susciperent et Francis adunati unus cum eis populus efficerentur*; ed. Waitz/Holder-Egger, 10). However, according to these authors the new commonwealth or empire was not to be founded on the principles of Catholic faith. Therefore they do not construct images of outsiders or out-groups that would serve as a negative backdrop to strengthen the sense of community among the new entity formed out of Franks and Saxons. See Eggert, "'Franken und Sachsen' bei Notker, Widukind und anderen", *Historiographie im frühen Mittelalter*, Vienna/Munich 1994, 514–530.

[25] Linehan, *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain*, Oxford 1993, 4.

[26] For the identification of Spanish identity and Catholic faith in the high middle ages see the treatise written by Lucas of Tuy *adversus Albigenses* III, 3 (ed. Mariana, Ingolstadt 1612, 160). For the reception of anti-Jewish notions in later medieval Spain cf. Meyuhas Ginio, "El concepto de *perfidia judaica* de la época visigoda en la perspec-

social model became dominant during the reconquest and subsequent conquest of America, it entailed the marginalization and expulsion of Jews and Muslims as well as the fight against Protestantism on the European scale.[27]

The title of Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo's "Historia de los heterodoxos españoles" (1880/81) points to the fundamental ideological dichotomy of Catholics versus non-Catholics of every kind; it is remarkable, though, that the author does call such dissidents "Spanish" after all.[28] After the loss of the last overseas colonies in 1898 the monolithic conceptualization of a Catholic nation led to a crisis of self-perception among members of the so-called "generation of 98", which culminated in the intellectual struggle between exponents of the "two Spains", represented by the traditional and Catholic concept on the one hand and a more liberal worldview on the other one.[29] The tensions between the

tiva castellana del siglo XV", *Helmántica* 46 (1995), 299–311. See also Linehan, "Religion, Nationalism and National Identity in Medieval Spain and Portugal", *Religion and National Identity*, Oxford 1982, 161–199. For the concept of "unidad espiritual", combining Catholicism and a particular view of patriotism, see Bräcker, "Himmlischer Schutzpatron oder Ausgeburt der Hölle? Ignatius von Loyola im Kontext des baskischen Nationalismus", *Saeculum* 53 (2002), 142. See also Arco, *La idea de imperio en la política y la literatura españolas*, Madrid 1944.

[27] For the "conflict of the two medieval Spains" see Cruz Hernández, "Spanien und der Islam", *Saeculum* 3 (1952), 367; this "pluralistic" concept of Spanish history is directed against positions such as José Ortega y Gasset's "España invertebrada", who claimed that the Arabs had poisoned Spanish culture. For the historiographical problem of the "two Spains" see also Niedermayer, "Zwei Spanien? Ein Beitrag zum Gespräch über spanische Geschichtsauffassung", *Saeculum* 3 (1952), 444–476; Monroe, *Islam and the Arabs in Spanish Scholarship*, Leiden 1970, 246–263. According to Rafael Calvo Serer's *España sin problema* (1949), only Catholicism can be the "backbone" of Spain. See also Lannon, "Modern Spain: the Project of a National Catholicism", *Religion and National Identity*, Oxford 1982, 567–590.

[28] Linehan, *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain*, Oxford 1993, 15.

[29] For the latter see the *convivencia*-theory of Américo Castro in his *España en su historia. Cristianos, moros y judíos*, Buenos Aires 1948, and id., *La realidad histórica de España*, Mexico 1954; Monroe, *Islam and the Arabs in Spanish Scholarship*, Leiden 1970, 258–263. Castro wanted to present Islam as an integral part of Spanish history; in this he had been preceded by Angel González Palencia, *Moros y cristianos*, Madrid 1945. Certain aspects of Castro's *convivencia*-ideal are corrected by Glick, *Islamic and Christian Spain in the Early Middle Ages*, Princeton 1979, who maintains that cultural exchange does not preclude ethnic and religious conflict; see esp. 6–13 and Monroe, 260. For an adaptation of that model to the high and later middle ages see Gampel, "Does Medieval Navarrese Jewry Salvage Our Notion of Convivencia?", *In Iberia and Beyond: Hispanic Jews between Cultures*, Newark/Del. and London 1998, 97–122; Romano, "Coesistenza—convivenza tra ebrei e cristiani ispanici", *Sefarad* 55 (1995), 359–382; Meyuhas Ginio, "Conveniencia o coexistencia? Acotaciones al pensamiento de Américo Castro", *Creencias y culturas*, Salamanca/Tel-Aviv 1998, 147–158 and Nirenberg, "Violencia, memoria y conviven-

two opposed concepts of Spanish history and identity ultimately contributed to the eruption of the violent political and military confrontations that ended in the civil war and Franco's dictatorship.[30]

It would be ludicrous to draw a direct line from 7th-century Visigothic Spain to modern Spanish history. Yet it is important to point out parallels and similarities because the reception, interpretation and assessment of Visigothic and more especially Isidorian sources and concepts were characterized by the dichotomy of the "two Spains" in modern scholarship and politics until the 20th century.[31] In that conflict one side continued to define Spanish identity by a reference to Catholic faith as its main if not only foundation. The main representative of the traditional, Catholic interpretation of Spanish history in the 19th century was Menéndez y Pelayo, who stressed the significance of the Catholic church for the process of nation-building.[32] Even the Visigothic triad of *gens, rex et patria* was adapted to later periods by exponents of the conservative, traditionalist view of Spanish history in the 20th century.[33]

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cia. Los judíos en el medioevo ibérico", *Memoria y civilización* 2 (1999), 31–53. For the controversy about Castro's theses see Lapeyre, "Deux interprétations de l'histoire de l'Espagne: Américo Castro et Claudio Sánchez Albornoz", *Annales* 20 (1965), 1015–1037; Gómez Martínez, *Américo Castro y el origen de los españoles. Historia de una polémica*, Madrid 1975. For the debate on the interpretation of Spanish history see Ladero Quesada, "La 'decadencia' española somo argumento historiográfico", *Lecturas sobre la España histórica*, Madrid 1998, 213–285; id., "¿Es todavía España un 'enigma histórico'? Releyendo a Sánchez-Albornoz", ibid. 317–341 and Quiñonero, *De la inexistencia de España*, Madrid 1998.

[30] Manuel Azaña, who later became president of the Second Republic, declared in 1931 that Catholic Spain had ceased to exist; cf. Niedermayer, "Zwei Spanien? Ein Beitrag zum Gespräch über spanische Geschichtsauffassung", *Saeculum* 3 (1952), 453 note 27. On the other hand, the Spanish Primate cardinal Gomá declared at the end of the civil war in 1939: "… la columna vertebral que sostiene la historia patria, su médula es el Catolicismo. Catolicismo y Patria se han dado un abrazo secular en tierras de España." (Linehan, *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain*, Oxford 1993, 34 note 46). See now Sáez-Arance, "Constructing Iberia: National Traditions and the Problem(s) of a Peninsular History", *European Review of History* 10 (2003), 189–203.

[31] For the "invention" of Spain's cultural identity by Spanish intellectuals of the modern age see Rehrmann, "Historia y ficción: El pasado tricultural de España y los sefardíes en la *generación del 98*", *Bremer Sephardenbrief* 1 (1999), 1–6. The "mythological" concept of the Spanish nation and of its history often involved a devaluation, even rejection of its Jewish and Islamic components.

[32] "… la unidad de la creencia. Sólo por ella adqiere un pueblo vida propia y conciencia de su fuerza unánime … La Iglesia nos educó a sus pechos … Por ella fuimos nación, y gran nación." (*Historia de los heterodoxos españoles*, Madrid 1880, III, 832 f.).

[33] García Villada, *Historia Eclesiástica* III, Madrid 1936, 179: "… las dos ideas madres que impulsaron la reconquista fueron la religión y la patria, y como fuerza directriz, la

The identification of *hispanidad* and Catholic faith on the one hand and of "strangers" with heterodoxy on the other one is still obvious in an article published towards the end of Franco's rule, in a discussion of preaching in Spanish patristics: "… la unidad católica de la nueva nación hispano-goda quedó sellada definitivamente en el III Concilio de Toledo el 8 de mayo del 589. Junto con el arrianismo perdieron los godos en aquella fecha la extranjería."[34] Apparently, the last Gothic myth of origin was so strong that it was not only advocated by Visigothic authors of the early middle ages but still propagated in the second half of the 20th century, when representatives of the concept of *hispanidad* continued to uphold a concept of Spanish identity basically and structurally identical with that of the "new" Gothic self-perception invented, among others, by Leander and Isidore of Seville almost 1400 years earlier.

The religious concept of Spanish identity was particularly strong in the period between the later middle ages and the end of Franco's dictatorship. In his work "Recaredo y la unidad católica", published in 1890, Modesto Hernández Villaescusa accused the Jews of having hampered and disturbed the unity of Catholic Spain since Visigothic times.[35] The conservative author Ramiro de Maeztu praised the struggle against Jews and Moors as an almost mythical act in his work "La defensa de la Hispanidad", published for the first time in 1934. During this fight the Spanish nation was said to have generated and developed its identity: "El carácter español se ha formado en la lucha multisecular contra los moros y contra los judíos."[36] Maeztu idealized the 16th century as a period when national unity had allegedly been achieved, something he regarded as the precondition for the beneficial mission

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monarquía." Even Menéndez Pidal proceeded from the assumption of an "eternal and Catholic Spain" (Monroe, *Islam and the Arabs in Spanish Scholarship*, Leiden 1970, 253); for similar views expressed by Sánchez Albornoz, coupled with racialist anti-Judaism, ibid. 256f.

[34] Verd, "La predicación patrística española", *EE* 47 (1972), 236. See also García Villoslada, *Historia de la Iglesia en España*, Madrid 1979, I, XLII: "¿Cuándo nace España? A mi entender, en el momento en que la Iglesia católica la recibe en sus brazos oficialmente y en cierto modo la bautiza en mayo del 589." Cf. also Linehan, *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain*, Oxford 1993, 17: "… the consubstantiality of *Nacional-Catolicismo* was not a product of the 1940s. It dated from 589." See also Simonet, *El concilio III de Toledo, base de nacionalidad y civilización española*, Madrid 1891.

[35] Hernández Villaescusa, *Recaredo y la unidad católica. Estudio histórico-crítico*, Barcelona 1890.

[36] Quoted after Rehrmann, "Historia y ficción: El pasado tricultural de España y los sefardíes en la *generación del 98*", *Bremer Sephardenbrief* 1 (1999), 4. "Ramiro de Maeztu …

of Spain inside and outside Europe. In this connection he also voiced anti-Jewish sentiments similar to a trend of Visigothic legislation, which continued to regard baptized Jews as Jews.[37] This could appear as an echo of anti-Jewish legislation of the late 7th century, but not of Isidore of Seville's attitude, who made no difference between Jewish and non-Jewish Christians. Finally Maeztu even blamed Jewish obstinacy for the establishment of the inquisition.[38]

It should be noted that not only Maeztu as a representative of the traditional, conservative concept of Spain voiced such anti-Jewish views, but also the liberal poet Antonio Machado, who called the Jews a God-killing nation ("pueblo deicida").[39] Taken together, these two voices illustrate to what extent anti-Jewish thinking influenced the "invention" of modern Spanish identity at the beginning of the 20th century. It is therefore no surprise that antisemitic positions also influenced scholarship. In an article published in 1941 Angel Custodio Vega praised Sisebut as the only "politician" of the early 7th century who realized the magnitude of the "Jewish danger", which allegedly prompted the king to react in an appropriate manner ahead of his time (!).[40] In a book published in 1945 Justo Pérez de Urbel claimed that Isidore of Seville tried to "diminish the number of Jews" with the help of his treatise *de fide catholica*.[41]

Fortunately enough, such positions were not predominant throughout the greater part of the middle ages. This may be due, among other things, to the extenuating influence of Isidore of Seville as the "teacher of the middle ages", who handed down conservative patristic assessments, attitudes and positions, assigning a marginal place to the Jews and allowing them to exist on the edge of Christian society.[42] A critical

en su libro Defensa de la Hispanidad (1941: 210) ve en la lucha—naturalmente justa—contra las dos minorías históricas algo así como un acto fundacional de la nación." (Ibid.).

[37] "… un judío sigue siendo un judío cuando abjura de su fe" (Maeztu, *Defensa de la Hispanidad*, Madrid 1941, 212; quoted after Rehrmann, "Historia y ficción", *Bremer Sephardenbrief* 1, 1999, 4).

[38] "Por ello precisamente nos obligaron a establecer la Inquisición." (Ibid.).

[39] Rehrmann, "Historia y ficción", *Bremer Sephardenbrief* 1 (1999), 5.

[40] Vega, "Una herejía judaizante del siglo VIII en España", *CD* 153 (1941), 62f.

[41] Pérez de Urbel, *Isidor von Sevilla*, Cologne 1962 (Barcelona 1945), 232. On Pérez de Urbel see Linehan, *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain*, Oxford 1993, 19 and 69: He was *abad mitrado* of the Benedictine monastery of El Valle de los Caídos, Franco's burial place and at the same time monument to the "national" victory won in the civil war.

[42] For the adaptation of this model to the conditions of 13th-century Castile, when

analysis of Isidore's views and works shows to what extent he was deter-
mined by prejudices, values and ideas of his own time, but also in what
ways people living in later centuries interpreted and used his concepts
and notions for their own ends.

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it was also extended to the Muslims, cf. Tolan, *Saracens. Islam in the Medieval European
Imagination*, New York 2002, 192: "… the attribution to Muslims of a subservient but
tolerated legal status equivalent to that accorded to Jews—a status that thirteenth-
century canon law accords to both Jews and Muslims but denies to heretics."

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